



TECHNICKÁ UNIVERZITA V LIBERCI
Fakulta přírodovědně-humanitní
a pedagogická



Jazyk černého britského a černého amerického rapu

Bakalářská práce

Studijní program: B7507 – Specializace v pedagogice
Studijní obory: 7504R300 – Španělský jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání
7507R036 – Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání
Autor práce: **Jan Wolf**
Vedoucí práce: Christopher Muffett, M.A.





TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF LIBEREC
Faculty of Science, Humanities
and Education



The Language of Black British and Black American Rap

Bachelor thesis

Study programme: B7507 – Specialization in Pedagogy
Study branches: 7504R300 – Spanish for Education
7507R036 – English for Education

Author: **Jan Wolf**
Supervisor: Christopher Muffett, M.A.



ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení: Jan Wolf
Osobní číslo: P17000586
Studijní program: B7507 Specializace v pedagogice
Studijní obory: Španělský jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání
Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání
Název tématu: Jazyk černého britského a černého amerického rapu
Zadávací katedra: Katedra anglického jazyka

Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

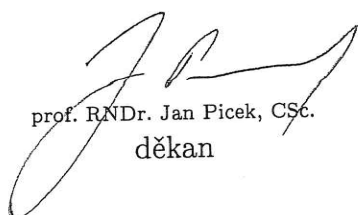
Cílem práce je určit rozdílnost ve slovní zásobě, tématice a výslovnosti v uvedených hudebních subžánrech a zdůvodnit rozdílnosti a podobnosti nalezených výsledků. K tomuto účelu budou shromážděna data z dostatečného množství zdrojů, která budou rozebírána za základě stanovených kritérií.

Rozsah grafických prací: dle potřeby
Rozsah pracovní zprávy: 40
Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: tištěná/elektronická
Jazyk zpracování bakalářské práce: *Angličtina*
Seznam odborné literatury:


- 1) Bramwell, Richard. 2015. UK Hip-hop, Grime and the City: The Aesthetics and Ethics of Londons Rap Scenes. New York: Routledge.
- 2) Boakye, Jeffrey. 2017. Hold Tight - Black Masculinity, Millennials and the Meaning of Grime. Influx Press.
- 3) Rose, Tricia. 1994. Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.
- 4) Wiley. 2018. Eskiboy. S.l.: Windmill Books.
- 5) Buckholz, William. 2010. Understand Rap: Explanations of Confusing Rap Lyrics You & Your Grandma Can Understand. New York: Abrams Image.
- 6) George, Nelson. 1998. Hip Hop America. New York: Viking.
- 7) Light, Alan. 1999. The Vibe History of Hip Hop. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- 8) DJ Target. 2018. Grime Kids. S.l.: Trapeze.
- 9) Collins, Hattie. 2017. This Is Grime. S.l.: Hodder Paperback.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: Christopher Muffett, M.A.
Katedra anglického jazyka

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: 30. dubna 2018
Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: 30. dubna 2019


prof. RNDr. Jan Pícek, CSc.
děkan

L.S.


PhDr. Marcela Malá, M.A., Ph.D.
vedoucí katedry

V Liberci dne 30. dubna 2018

Prohlášení

Byl jsem seznámen s tím, že na mou bakalářskou práci se plně vztahuje zákon č. 121/2000 Sb., o právu autorském, zejména § 60 – školní dílo.

Beru na vědomí, že Technická univerzita v Liberci (TUL) nezasahuje do mých autorských práv užitím mé bakalářské práce pro vnitřní potřebu TUL.

Užiji-li bakalářskou práci nebo poskytnu-li licenci k jejímu využití, jsem si vědom povinnosti informovat o této skutečnosti TUL; v tomto případě má TUL právo ode mne požadovat úhradu nákladů, které vynaložila na vytvoření díla, až do jejich skutečné výše.

Bakalářskou práci jsem vypracoval samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a na základě konzultací s vedoucím mé bakalářské práce a konzultantem.

Současně čestně prohlašuji, že texty tištěné verze práce a elektronické verze práce vložené do IS STAG se shodují.

23. 6. 2019

Jan Wolf

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, Christopher Muffett, M.A. for his advice, guidance and support. Also, I want to give thanks to my family for supporting me during my studies. Lastly, I would like to show my appreciation to all the teachers at the English Department at the Faculty of Science, Humanities and Education of the Technical University in Liberec for allowing me to improve the level of my English.

Anotace a klíčová slova

Předmětem této bakalářské práce je jazyk černé britské a černé americké rapové hudby. V teoretické části se práce věnuje historii hudebního žánru, subžánrům, jazykovým a kulturním rozdílům a podobnostem mezi rapem produkovaným v těchto dvou zemích. Dále teoretická část obsahuje slovník rapové terminologie a slangových výrazů v tomto žánru často užívaných. Praktickou částí této bakalářské práce je analýza textů, ve které jsou znázorněny tři výrazné rozdíly mezi rapovou hudbou z výše zmiňovaných dvou zemí. Těmito rozdíly jsou postoj rapperek, přístup k drogám a způsob egotripu.

Klíčová slova

MC, beat, riddim, flow, egotrip

Annotation and Keywords

The subject of this thesis is the language of black British and black American rap music. In the theoretical part, the thesis deals with the history of the music genre, subgenres, linguistic and cultural differences and similarities between rap music produced in these two countries. Furthermore, the theoretical part contains a dictionary of rap terminology and slang expressions used in this genre. The practical part of this thesis is an analysis of texts in which three distinct differences between rap music produced in the above-mentioned countries are illustrated. The differences are in the attitude of female rappers, the approach towards drugs, and the way of egotripping.

Keywords

MC, beat, riddim, flow, egotrip

Table of contents

Acknowledgements.....	6
Anotace a klíčová slova	7
Klíčová slova	7
Annotation and Keywords	8
Keywords	8
Table of contents	9
1 Introduction	11
2 The origins and evolution of rap music	12
2.1 African Roots.....	12
2.2 Blues, the first dominant black genre	12
2.3 On the wave of jazz music.....	13
2.4 Rhythm and Blues, another milestone on the path to recognition	13
2.5 The beginnings of Hip Hop music - the 1970s	14
2.6 The 1980s era – The beginnings of gangsta rap music	16
2.7 The 1990s – „The golden age“ & rap and rap wars.....	16
2.8 American rap music at the beginning of the new millennium	18
2.9 Rap music, the biggest music genre on the planet.....	19
2.10 The beginnings of British rap music – the 1970s and 1980s	20
2.11 The 1990s – Britcore.....	21
2.12 New millennium – grime music and road rap.....	22
2.13 British rap music today	23
3 Rap subgenres.....	25
3.1 Old School	25
3.2 True School.....	26
3.3 G-Funk.....	26
3.4 Gangsta Rap.....	26
3.5 Conscious Rap	27
3.6 Trap.....	27
3.7 Mumble Rap	28
3.8 Cloud Rap	29
3.9 Emotional rap.....	30
3.10 Grime	30
3.11 Trip Hop.....	31
3.12 Britcore.....	31
3.13 Horrorcore.....	32
3.14 Pop Rap	32
3.15 Rap Rock.....	33
3.16 Rap Metal.....	33
3.17 Ragga Rap	33
3.18 Country Rap	34
3.19 Jazz Rap	34
3.20 Christian Rap	35
3.21 Comedy Rap.....	35
3.22 Freestyle	36
4 Language and cultural differences and similarities of British and American rap music.....	37
4.1 Drugs.....	37

4.2	Commercialization and fashion	38
4.3	The N word and vulgarities generally.....	39
4.4	The attitude of female rappers	40
4.5	Music videos and egotripping.....	42
4.6	Grime repetition.....	44
4.7	Terminology.....	44
4.8	Language.....	46
4.9	Pronunciation.....	46
5	Conclusion.....	49
6	References	50
7	The analysis	53
7.1	The attitude of female rappers	53
7.2	The approach towards drugs	56
7.3	Different egotrip	58
8	Rap Dictionary.....	62

1 Introduction

The aim of the thesis was to establish the linguistic and cultural differences between the language of black British and black American rap music. The establishing of these differences is defined in the five principal chapters. The principal chapters all together create a sophisticated and complex picture of rap music and its evolution. The main distinctions proven in the thesis were different approaches towards drug abuse, distinct ways of egotripping and dissimilar stances of female rappers towards the creation of their public images in the UK and the USA. The main evidence for these findings can be found in the Analysis of the lyrics chapter.

The examination and comparison of the lyrics will be performed by means of text analysis, which will be done objectively and with factors such as difference in social background, genre evolution, cultural differences and influence of other music genres taken in account. The analysis of texts of various subgenres from similar time periods will be executed with an unbiased point of view. The observation will include a close look at the quality and depth of lyrics, amount of vulgarities, used vocabulary, used themes, general popularity, contemporaneity of the sound and musical contribution to the rap genre. This method of analysis will hopefully recognize the differences, distinguish qualities, highlight similarities, compare the contribution to the music world and the influence given to the society. The conclusion of the work will contain my justification of qualities, deficiencies, differences and similarities of the types of rap music produced in the Great Britain and the USA.

The key points of this analysis prove that in the United States and the United Kingdom there exist demonstrably different attitudes. This is demonstrated by the female rappers themselves and the various approaches to drugs and egotripping in rap music. The materials and evidence of the research will be contained in various chapters of this paper, but the main confirmation for the prognosis will be provided in the analysis, for which six songs by six different artists were chosen. The purpose of this thesis is to educate with regards to the music genre and prove certain cultural and linguistic differences and similarities between rap music produced in these two countries. The paper will hopefully enrich the view of rap music as a music genre, which can be eventually used for pedagogical purposes.

2 The origins and evolution of rap music

In this chapter the origins and evolution of rap music will be discussed starting with its African roots, then moving to the beginnings of rap music in the USA and the UK, then finishing with the form of current rap music. This chapter is to provide a look on the evolution of British and American rap music and their separate development. The development is categorized by significant rap eras.

2.1 African Roots

Rap, as originally black music, has its roots in Africa, where indigenous tribes used to tell their stories and legends in the rhythm of drums and other homemade musical instruments during their ceremonies. People commissioned with the privilege to retell these stories and legends were called griots and were highly respected in the tribal hierarchy. As white men invaded Africa, captured and enslaved millions of black men who were eventually dragged to other continents, black music began to spread. The biggest development of black music took place in America, as this was the country with the highest amount of enslaved black people. Manually working slaves used their work songs and chants to help them endure the anguish of slavery. These songs were very rhythmic, had simple and easily rememberable lyrics and obviously were sung acapella (Finnegan 2012, 96-100).

2.2 Blues, the first dominant black genre

As black people were eventually freed from slavery, they developed their own music genres. One of these music genres which had a significant impact on today's rap music, was blues. Blues music originated in the part of the United States of America, which is called the Deep South and consists of East Texas, Southeast Arkansas, West Tennessee and Eastern North Carolina. Blues directly developed from the work songs and was influenced by the aftermath of slavery. One of the first record companies that produced black blues music was Black Swan Records, which was founded in the year 1921. Black music generally was not very appealing to white audiences, but this record company decided to break the taboo and their records proudly carried their slogan „The only records using exclusively negro voices and musicians“. Unfortunately the white audience was not ready yet for black artists and three years later Black Swan Records was bought by a bigger recording company (Vesely 2012, 30). Blues music used musical

instruments such as guitar, piano, harmonica, bass, blues harp, xylophone and of course drums. Blues eventually spread into other countries. One of these countries was the United Kingdom, where blues music experienced its biggest popularity in the 1950s and 1960s, but it is important to mention that in contrast to America, in the United Kingdom the biggest blues artists were usually Caucasian. At that time in the United States, blues had plenty subgenres, such as electric blues, jump blues, country blues, piano blues or boogie woogie. The most famous artists of this music genre world wide were B. B. King, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Buddy Guy or Jimi Hendrix (Evans 2006, 69-82).

2.3 On the wave of jazz music

The direct offspring of blues was jazz, which is a music genre that occurred in the USA, more specifically in New Orleans at the end of the 19th century and continued to grow in the following decades. Jazz music was so widely spread that the 1920s and 1930s earned a name the Jazz era. Typical musical instruments used by jazz artists were horns, piano, keyboard, bass, drums, guitar and vocals. Subgenres that derived from original jazz music were bebop, big band, hard bop, latin jazz, m-base, soul jazz, swing, gypsy jazz, neo-bop, chamber jazz, cool jazz, modal jazz, progressive jazz or third Stream. Bebop and a few other related subgenres were a kind of a wild mixture of blues and jazz music and these mixtures were the first black music that really earned the sympathies of white listeners. Although bebop never became a mainstream genre, it made white people realize that black music has a lot to offer (Veselý 2012, 31, 32). The most famous jazz artists of this time are Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie or Louis Armstrong. Jazz reached the United Kingdom in the 1930s and in the 1940s it was widely spread. Jazz music was followed by a new poetic style called jazz poetry. Jazz poetry has been characterized as verse that shows jazz-like musicality or the vibe of improvisation and furthermore as a poetic style that takes jazz music, artists, or the jazz environment as its subject. Jazz poetry has never been mainstream, but it has set the roots of slam poetry and it is the direct predecessor of hip hop music. The most renowned slam poets were Langston Hughes, Sun Ra, Amiri Baraka, Jack Kerouac, Gil Scott-Heron or a group called The Last Poets (Veselý 2012, 255-258).

2.4 Rhythm and Blues, another milestone on the path to recognition

In the 1940s a new black music genre appeared. American people already knew

that black music existed somewhere deep there in the underground, but at this time there was brand new music that was about to hit the mainstream. The predecessor of today's R&B was very wild and combined the features of jazz, blues and black gospel music. It was clear where R&B came from, but its sound was slightly different. R&B musicians already used electrified instruments and the singers even had to chant loudly to be able to hear their own voices. American listeners were not familiar with such energetic tension and that might be the reason why rhythm and blues eventually earned such mass popularity. The reputation of this genre was so strong that in the year 1948 Billboard magazine renamed its chart from Harlem Hit Parade to Rhythm and blues. About a decade later musicians such as Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Bo Diddley or The Chords dominated the music charts and even though their skin was black, they were famous and renowned all over the USA. But although the sales of their records were great, the majority of them had pictures of white couples in love on the cover as it was more convenient from the perspective of sales. At this time black music finally fully expanded overseas and it had a great impact on the world's mainstream music as such. Legendary music bands such as The Beatles or The Rolling Stones eventually released a few cover versions of black American R&B and soul records on their albums (Veselý 2012, 32).

2.5 The beginnings of Hip Hop music - the 1970s

In the middle of the 1970s musicians started experimenting with their tunes and new technological possibilities. Hip hop was created as a mixture of funk, disco and Jamaican dub. The first person to ever make hip hop instrumental music was an artist called DJ Kool Herc, who came from Jamaica. This young DJ got the brilliant idea to use two soundsystem machines at the same times to mix two different genres and gain a brand new type of sound. While playing his new music mixture Kool Herc chanted lines of rhymed lyrics, which was a feature of dub music that he had known from his motherland, Jamaica. Another DJ called Grandmaster Flash perfected this process of making music with smooth transitions, but suddenly realized that if he really wanted to concentrate on mixing, he did not really have the time for dub chanting. That is why he delegated his friends with this task and that is how the legendary hip hop crew Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five was founded. And also that is how MCing came into being (Veselý 2012, 187-190). Artists realized how easy it was to perform this new strange semispoken type of music. Hip hop was in the streets, black youngsters

were beatboxing and rapping for some spare money and they did not even need any instruments. The real instrumental music makers used looped samples of music of other genres with added drums to make new instrumental music, which was constantly repeated and was still the same, but that was the reason why it was perfectly suitable for rapping. Another typical feature of early hip hop music was scratching. Scratching was invented by chance when an artist called Grand Wizard Theodore accidentally touched the vinyl record while mixing his new music. The touch made a very specific sound that soon became a hip hop equivalent of a rock guitar solo. This new hip hop feature was something that distinguished the genre from all the others and undoubtedly contributed to the popularization of the genre. Scratching soon became a discipline that had its own competitions and these events certainly helped spread awareness of hip hop music (Veselý 2012, 190-192). However, hip hop was not only about music. It was a whole lifestyle consisting of DJing, graffiti, break dance, beat boxing and of course rapping and all these hip hop elements were connected with the streets (Forman 2011, 28). Young people in the USA loved it and hip hop culture started growing and expanding. But even though hip hop tended to be bigger and bigger, it was not mainstream and even the most renowned and reputable hip hoppers were not even nearly as rich or famous as rock or pop stars. It had a simple reason, their music was dedicated to a relatively narrow audience. A key movement of the expansion of hip hop culture was the production of party tapes. Party tapes were illegally homemade hip hop records, which were sold in the streets or in small shops. And even though this type of dissemination may seem too simple and foolish, it worked just fine. Soon hip hop was heard not only from the street artists, but also from car radios, in clubs and bars. One of the typical features of the early hip hop music was that it was not commercial and it was at this time when the slogan „Keep it real“ came into being. Keeping it real meant to stay loyal to your people, your streets and the place you have come from and not just doing something for money and fame, but for the fact that you love it. Another meaning of the slogan was to emphasize that the artists speak honestly about the life they live in their music (Rose 2008, 134, 135). This was the first hip hop era which began in the 1970s. The main topics of this music were dancing, making music, graffiti, partying and women, but women were mentioned with much more respect compared to today's rap music. It is necessary to mention that vulgarities were not common in 1970s' hip hop music. The most recognized artists of this era were The Watts Prophets, The Sugarhill

Gang, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, The Cold Crush Brothers, Afrikaa Bambaata, Newcleus, The Sequence, Funky 4+1 and legendary DJ Kool Herc. All of these artists were African American and most of them did not play only hip hop music, but their performances usually also included jazz, funk or club dance music (Forman 2011, 23-38).

2.6 The 1980s era – The beginnings of gangsta rap music

The 1980s were the first decade of hip hop music as a recognized music genre. Hip hop artists no longer had to play other genres to get by, because hip hop had developed into a full-fledged music genre with its own specific audience. Hip hoppers were still not as rich and renowned as rock stars, but the successful ones were no longer street artists, but musicians who performed for a fair honorarium. The topics used in rap music changed a lot since the 1970s. Peaceful party music about dancing was replaced with represent songs and egotrips, songs about boasting with money, songs about women, street credit and rap skills. At this time hip hop as a music genre was not as humble as in the 1970s, but compared to contemporary rap, it was still decent music. Since hip hop was more accessible for new artists from the lower class, many young black men decided to start rapping about the struggles of their lives. And since their biggest problems often were poverty, gang wars and mistreatment from society, a new type of rap music started developing at the end of the decade, gangsta rap music. The most famous and important artists of this era were Beastie Boy, Run DMC, Slick Rick, Public Enemy, Ice T, LL Cool J and N.W.A., most of these artists were African American (Forman 2011, 111).

2.7 The 1990s – „The golden age“ & rap and rap wars

At the end of the 1980s gangsta rap as a new music genre came into being and this music about dealing drugs, killing people and getting rich was becoming more and more popular. Vulgarities and disrespect were very common elements of gangsta rap music. The slogan „Keep it real“ was still used and it meant to rap about what you live. However foolish it might have seemed, many rappers claimed that when they rapped about homicide, drug dealing or other illegal activities, they spoke the truth. Some of them had problems with the police or even the the Federal Bureau of Investigation just because they confessed their felonies in their music. Rapper Ice Cube from the iconic gangsta rap crew N.W.A. (Niggaz Wit Attitudes) was under observation of the FBI for a

couple of years after the release of the single *Fuck Tha Police*, which was a protest song against police brutality and racism (Forman 2011, 240).

No wonder that gangsta rap was violent, its artists were gangsters using music to reflect their life as it really was. At this time there was a rivalry between West Coast rappers and East Coast rappers. In the early 1990s, rappers and DJs from California, such as N.W.A., Comptons Most Wanted or DJ Quik were by far the most popular rap artists within the hip hop community. Magazines such as *Word Up* or *Source* provided more coverage to artists from Los Angeles than to their colleagues from The City of New York. New York rappers thus did not appreciate West Coast rappers concerting in their city even though New York artists were always welcome in California. Many eastern rappers might have been frustrated, because rap fans wanted them to dress and rap like the famous group N.W.A. from Compton, California. In the year 1991 rapper Tim Dog from Bronx, New York, released a song called *Fuck Compton*. It was a disstrack dedicated to Compton rappers, especially to the group N.W.A. In 1992 Tim Dog admitted in an interview with *Rap City* that the main reason for the disstrack was that the record label that he wanted to sign a contract with, wanted him to make music similar to N.W.A.'s and that made him upset. This disstrack never earned a proper answer, as N.W.A. soon broke up because of personal issues amongst its members, but it raised the level of rancor between New York and Los Angeles (Forman 2011, 95-97).

In the year 1993 Bad Boy Records label was founded by New York rapper Sean „Puff Daddy“ Combs. It was the first label to be able to compete with the West Coast stars, thanks to its top artists such as Biggie Smallz, Puff Daddy or Craig Mack. Finally there was somebody from the East Coast to compete with such West Coast legends as Tupac Amaru Shakur, Ice Cube, Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg or Warren G. Since both sides were getting enough recognition, the rivalry started fading. Some western and eastern rappers even became close friends, for instance Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smallz. On November 30 1994 rapper Tupac Amaru Shakur, the biggest rap star of this era, was shot five times in the Quad Recording Studios in New York, where he had come to visit his friend Biggie Smallz. After the incident Shakur accused Biggie and Puff Daddy of involvement in the shooting, but they both denied it. Soon after the shooting, Biggie's song *Who shot ya* was released. Tupac interpreted this song as a disstrack taunting his assault, but Biggie claimed that it had been recorded before the shooting. In 1995 Tupac served nine months in Clinton Correctional Facility for sexual assault. He was released

in October 1995, as Suge Knight, the CEO of Death Row Records paid his bail in exchange for signing a contract with his label (Forman 2011, 171, 172).

Tupac was productive again and released his answer to Biggie. The disstrack Hit 'em up, which included a lot of confidential personal information about Biggie, is even today by hip hop community considered one of the best disstracks ever made in rap history. The situation between New York and Los Angeles got worse. Suge Knight, the CEO of Death Row, did not improve the situation, as he mocked the CEO of Bad Boy Records, Puff Daddy, during his speech at The Source Awards in New York the same year. More violence and disstracks were about to come, as more rappers got involved in this argument, for instance Nas, Mobb Deep, Capone & Noreaga, Tragedy Khadafi, Tha Dogg Pound or Snoop Dogg. The war ended with the death of both its central characters, Tupac was fatally shot on September 13, 1996 in Las Vegas and Biggie was murdered on March 9, 1997 in Los Angeles. Both of them died in a drive-by shooting. This argument between two legends and two major recording labels had a significant impact on rap music. Hip hop community calls this period the golden era of gangsta rap and there is no doubt that this era left indelible traces on rap music as it is today (Vesely 2012, 75).

It is important to mention that even though there was a lot of violence going on in rap, violence and gang wars were not the only topics of this period's rap music. Topics, such as partying, love, relationships and peace were popular as well. Rap was already fashionable enough, so rappers could collaborate with famous rock and pop stars, such as Elton John, R.E.M. or Pearl Jam and the products of these collaborations were in the top places of hit-parades. As its audience kept growing, rap was for the first time in history becoming a mainstream music genre (Forman 2011, 229).

2.8 American rap music at the beginning of the new millennium

Rap music as a mainstream music genre was played all over hit-parades, in music clubs and on the radio. Its popularity was growing, as there were new artists with a completely new sound. Rap was not only the raw and hard music about killing people, as there were more sub genres around, such as rock rap, pop rap, country rap, electro rap or trap. The sound of some of these sub genres was completely different from what rap music used to sound like in the 1990s. Even though classic boom bap rap with its sampled loop and rhythm giving kick was still around, many of the new sub genres

utilized more electronic instrumental music made with the use of synthesizers instead of samplers. But instrumental music was not the only thing that changed. Topics, style of rapping and the whole attitude of rappers changed as well. Rap music was not only for gangsters anymore. Not that there was no gangsta rap music around, but egotrips, represent songs, party music and conscious rap were more likely to get the attention of a wider audience. Rap music was more varied than ever before and with the rise of its popularity, the rise of sales came as well. Hip hop made it the the top and in this era, rap artists were as famous, rich and renowned as rock or pop artists. In the year 1999, Time magazine announced that rap, with 81 million albums sold, became the best-selling music genre in America. There were plenty of new names on the scene that eventually became the most important and influential rappers of this decade, such as Eminem, 50 Cent, The Game, Kanye West, Lil Wayne, T.I., Young Jeezy, DMX, Nelly or Ludacris, but there were also already known rap stars who continued in their prime time even after the end of the gangsta rap era, such as Snoop Dogg, Dr. Dre, Nas or Jay-Z (Vesely 2012, 78-81).

2.9 Rap music, the biggest music genre on the planet

Rap music continued in its diversification and after 2010 there were more rap sub genres than ever before. Rap music has become connected with all the other music genres, as it is convenient for musicians to add a rap verse to their songs, clearly from the sales perspective. Nowadays it might be even difficult for somebody to recognize, whether music is still considered rap, as it became very melodious and rappers very often sing, or use a very melodic type of flow with the use of various tones of their voice. Some contemporary rap subgenres might be easily confused with R&B or rock music, as many rappers use all kinds of instrumental music and their performance is rather sung than semi-spoken.

Rap music genres that are in their prime time in America are cloud rap, mumble rap, emotional rap, drill, trap and obviously pop rap. Topics of these subgenres differ dependably on their target audience. Pop rap songs are usually about love, emotional rap is commonly about depression, relationships and suicidal thoughts, trap rappers follow the footsteps of gangsta rap artists, but the topic that touches most of these subgenres, is drugs. Drug abuse has become a huge topic in rap music generally (Forman 2011, 288, 289).

In the past decades it was acceptable to rap about alcohol and marijuana, but the other drugs and especially hard drugs were considered a taboo. Contemporary rappers make music about cocaine, MDMA, LSD, oxycotton, methamphetamine, xanax, percocet and lean, a mixture of soda and prescription cough syrup with high amounts of codeine and promethesine. Drugs not only have influence on music, they also influence listeners. That is the reason why rap music is being lately criticized by the society. Rappers using lean have developed their own rap style which is called mumble rap, a very specific rap style which is very popular, even though it is difficult to understand. The most famous and influential contemporary rappers promoting drugs are for instance Lil Pump, Lil Peep, ASAP Mob, \$uicideboy\$, Migos, Future or Lil Uzi Vert.

In contrast with „drug rap“ there is conscious rap, a rap subgenre which focuses on creating mindfulness, raising awareness of world events and spreading knowledge. This type of rap commonly condemns violence, corruption and racism. The most renowned conscious rappers of this era are for example Nas, Kendrick Lamar, J. Cole or Immortal Technique.

2.10 The beginnings of British rap music – the 1970s and 1980s

In the United Kingdom before rap music there was its ancestor called dub. Dubbing was a specific kind of music brought to the United Kingdom by Jamaican migrants in the 1970s. Dubbing alias toasting required only one person who was responsible for both playing instrumental music called riddim and chanting rhymes in its rhythm. It is important to mention that dub was primarily an underground genre and many UK citizens might have not even noticed it (Shuker 2012, 117, 118). Dub was a very playful music genre that broke the rules of conventional music and brought new features and sound effects, such as echoes, reverb, delays and its own language (Vesely 2012, 180-185). As well as in America, in the United Kingdom rap music was in its beginnings connected with grafitti, break dancing, beat boxing and with the streets. But unlike the American hip hop, British rap music has been always multiracial, as there were numerous ethnics groups living all together in non segregated areas. The most iconic names that were responsible for the dub invasion were for instance King Tubby or Lee Scratch Perry (Vesely 2012, 53).

In the early 1980s there were no rappers releasing singles and albums, most of them only performed in clubs or on the street. It was pop and rock bands, such as

Wham!, Adam and the Ants, The Clash or Malcolm McLaren, who first released official rap singles in the UK, as they discovered American hip hop as a growing music genre with high potential on MTV (Vesely 2012, 52). As well as in America, even the first British rap music used instrumental music based on looped samples and scratches. In the upcoming years British hip hop innovated its instrumental music. Thanks to technological progress, producers started using machines like the Roland TR-808 instead of old samplers, which have changed the sound of rap instrumental music for good. Some other elements still remained the same, for instance scratches. This music was called electro rap. The most influential artists of this era were Derek B, Grandmaster Richie Rich, Ruthless Rap Assassins, Herbie the Mastermind or Rodney P. Releases were as yet rare, and the scene remained generally underground. At this time an essential component of rap music's survival in the United Kingdom were pirate radio stations, such as Rebel Radio FM, Kool FM, Sweet FM, Juice FM, Y2K or Power Jam FM. The activity of these stations was illegal and their operation and the dissemination of underground rap music only worked thanks to a few people who did not even claim any royalties. The first British music labels dedicated to produce rap music were Music of Life, Kold Sweat, Positive Beat Records and Mango Records, all founded in the late 1980s (Vesely 2012, 217-219)

2.11 The 1990s – Britcore

At the beginning of the 1990s British rap music had its own proper rap representation. Rappers such as Silver Bullet, Hijack, Blade, The Icepick, Shaka Shazam, Huntkillbury Fin or a crew called London Posse were representatives of a new UK's rap style called Britcore. Britcore was strongly influenced by American rap music that at that time experienced its prime, but it had its own specific characteristics. With 110-140 BPM, Britcore was much faster than American gangsta rap and it was full of British and Jamaican slang. The sound was unique and densely layered. This music reflected the lives of ordinary people who were commonly black and not very wealthy, which made them feel like they do not fit in British society. Britcore music was full of criticism of politics, racism, injustice, the police, lower class life and society itself. Rapping about criminality, narcotics and tough life full of struggling was very common, but in contrary to the US hip hop, its lyrics were still more decent and not so vulgar and disrespectful. The process of development and popularization of rap music was easier

and faster because there were already official radio stations, such as Rinse FM or BBC Radio One, which were willing to play rap music (Veselý 2012, 219-221).

2.12 New millennium – grime music and road rap

At the beginning of the new millennium, rap music in the United Kingdom came through significant changes. Electronic dance music, such as jungle, UK garage, UK rave, ragga, acid house or dancehall had been around for a while and it had a serious impact on rap music (Forman 2011, 175). Rappers started using new types of beats and riddims that were very different from the ones that they had been using in the 1990s (Veselý 2012, 185). The sound of the new instrumental music was more electronic, synthetic, aggressive and dark. The rhythm was not necessarily set by a kick and a snare, but more often by a bassline, which was usual in UK garage and related dance music. The speed of this music was usually set to 140 BPM, which is a very high rate and demands a skillful MC. This new kind of rap music in the UK earned a new name, grime. The style of rapping changed as well. Now more than ever before, it was important to keep a fast and smooth flow which perfectly fitted the beat, as it was music developed as a combination of dance music and hip hop. The lyrics used in grime music were usually not very sophisticated and it was common that the last word of a bar was repeated at the end of the following few bars.

The cradle of grime music was London. Pirate radio stations, such as Deja Vu FM, Raw Mission, Rinse FM or Major FM initiated spreading this music among rap music listeners. At the beginning, the subgenre had many names, such as 8-bar, sublow, nu shape or eskimo, but over some time only one name was left, grime. The first artists who tended to make this new progressive kind of music were names such as Wiley, Dread D, Jon E Cash, Pulse X, So Solid Crew or The Black Ops. Grime music soon became a new trend in rap and more rappers and DJs joined this wave of rap dance music. In 2003 Dizzee Rascal, one of the most dominant names of today's British rap music, won the Mercury Music Prize with his debut album *Boy in Da Corner*. In the middle of the decade Grime became the most popular rap music in the UK. The majority of the most influential UK rap artists, such as Skepta, JME, Stormzy, Tempa T, Lethal Bizzle, Bugzy Malone, Devlin, Wiley, Dizzee Rascal or D Double E, are all connected with grime music. In the upcoming decade Grime became well known and popular all over Europe and even in America (Veselý 2012, 222-225).

But grime music was not the only rap subgenre developed in the new millennium in the UK. Road rap, also known as trap or drill, was an answer to the late commercialisation of grime music. Road rap was more violent, vulgar and controversial. It had more minimalistic and simple instrumental music with the typical 808 drums and raw sound. Road rap was the British equivalent of American trap music. The themes of road rap were similar to those used in American gangsta rap and trap. Egotrips, represents and songs about crime and drugs were very typical for this subgenre. As well as in American gangsta rap, even for British road rappers it was important to stay true in their music, thus it was not unusual for many of them to have experience with crime and imprisonment [Pinkney, Robinson – Edwards 2017 in Pitts, et al. 2017, 32-40].

2.13 British rap music today

As well as in America, even in the UK rap music has become a very popular, wide and colorful music genre. Even though almost all the subgenres are now worldwide and it is possible to find their representatives in the UK, grime and trap still remain the biggest and most popular subgenres in the United Kingdom. Rappers like Stormzy, Skepta, JME or Dizzee Rascal still dominate the scene and their names have grown enough to become world rap stars. These rappers have already had world concert tours, as their music has become well known and popular all over Europe and even overseas. Another fact that indicates the importance of the British scene in the world of rap music, is the signing of the Canadian rap superstar Drake to the British recording label Boy Better Know, which was founded by brothers Joseph and Jamie Adenuga, better known in the world of rap as Skepta and JME. Collaborations of A list UK and US rap artists are becoming more common lately, for instance ASAP Rocky and Skepta - Praise the Lord, Giggs and B.o.B - Don't Go There, Tinie Tempah, J Cole and Wretch 32 - Like It Or Love It, Dave and Drake - Wanna Know or Skepta, ASAP Nast and D Double E - Ladies Hit the Squad. All of these songs were released in the past 10 years, but the frequency of collaborations changes over time. It is certain that both scenes inspire each other and that is why the differences between them slowly fade away. Even though grime music is even now typical primarily for the UK scene, it is absolutely clear that it had a significant impact on American rap music.

In this chapter the evolution of rap music, from its African beginnings to its form

as we know it today, was discussed. The development of British and American rap music was written down separately, but their influencing each other was taken into account. The knowledge of rap's history is essential to understand its development, cultural impact and other features influencing our society.

3 Rap subgenres

Rap music can be divided into many different subgenres. These subgenres mostly arise either by combining rap with another music genre, such as rap rock, pop rap, country rap, ragga, etc. or by using a unique rap style which differs in relation to the region from which rap artists come from, eg. West Coast gangsta rap or Britcore. The biggest difference amongst subgenres makes commonly the instrumental music, usually called a beat, that accompanies the rapper. While for example trap instrumentals sound more electronically and synthetically and are characterized by frequent use of the 808 drum machine, the old school boom bap rap relies on a classic kick, snare, sampling instrumental music from other music genres and DJ scratching (Forman 2011, 38). Another difference among subgenres is made by the themes used by rappers, while for instance cloud rap usually concerns lyrics about drugs, unhealthy lifestyle of a musician and egotripping, conscious rap is commonly about more serious topics, such as politics, racism and problems of the contemporary society. Hip hop has not only become a very dominant musical genre, but also an enormous culture that besides music also includes lifestyle, fashion and attitude to the society. The reason of the worldwide success of hip hop music is obvious. Rap has innumerable forms, it can adapt to a listener's need and due to its nature it is easily mixable with other music genres and cultures. By virtue of its range it is difficult to determine where the hip hop culture ends (Vesely 2012, 413). Due to the wide range of subspecies of this music, I have decided to provide a more detailed description of the most widespread and most influential ones from the aspect of rap music development.

3.1 *Old School*

Old school rap is music made by rap artists between the 1970s and the 1990s. It is the original hip hop music. Its instrumental music is very simple, minimalistic and made with the use of samplers. The beat does not have a melody, its basis is only a short loop taken from other music. The rhythm is set by a kick, the DJ is responsible for scratches, and its themes are primarily life in harsh and poverty-stricken streets, life as a gangster or representing the place that rappers have come from. This type of rap music no longer really exists, but a major part of hip hop community still considers the period of old school rap the golden era of hip hop music. Artists of this style include Tupac Shakur, Biggie Smallz, Run DMC, Big L, KRS One, Big Pun, Wu Tang Clan or N.W.A.

(Forman 2011, 95-97).

3.2 *True School*

This descendent of old school rap has continued in the footsteps of its predecessor with elements like sampling loops of music of other genres, scratches or rhythm set by a hard dick. However, compared to the old school rap, true school is more melodic, smoother and more enjoyable even to the ears of non-listeners of rap music. Of all the rap subgenres, true school keeps the most elements of the old school rap music. True school rap also usually carries a message, its lyrics are meaningful and often deep, which is something that the majority of modern rap subgenres lack. Though it is essential to mention that true school is not very in vogue and its popularity declines. Artists who keep true school alive are for instance Nas, Masta Ace, Evidence or Sean Price.

3.3 *G-Funk*

G-Funk is a rap subgenre which developed from funk, R&B and old school hip hop in the 1990s on the west coast of North America. The tempo of g-funk is slow, its instrumental music is very melodic and its sound is more synthetic and soft compared to old school or true school rap. The beat is made with the use of both samplers and synthesizers. A deep sound of bass is very typical for g-funk instrumental music. The themes used in g-funk are women, partying, soft drugs and violence, as the g in g-funk stands for gangsta. Typical g-funk rappers are for instance Snoop Dogg, Dr. Dre, Nate Dogg or Warren G (Forman 2011, 236-237).

3.4 *Gangsta Rap*

Gangsta rap is a term which was first used in the late 1980s to describe N.W.A.'s music. This music's sound was similar to classic hip hop of that era, but it was more aggressive and its lyrics were full of violence, disrespect to authorities and defiance. This new kind of music instantly gained popularity and respect in the hip hop community. The prime time of gangsta rap music was in the 1990s. The war between West Coast and East Coast rappers is probably the most exemplary period of gangsta rap music. Thanks to arguments amongst hip hop artists, rap music was full of violence, egotripping and insults. Unfortunately, as rappers wanted to „keep it real“ and stand by

their words, the music was followed by real violence, shooting and eventually killing (Forman 2011, 240). Gangsta rap has not died in the late 1990s with the end of the war between the East Coast and the West Coast. It is difficult to define the instrumental sound of gangsta rap, as any contemporary rap music with gangster theme can be considered gangsta rap music. But the original gangsta rap was characterized by simple instrumental music with boom bap sound. The most famous original gangsta rap artists were Tupac Amaru Shakur, Biggie Smallz, N.W.A., Snoop Dogg, Public Enemy or Raekwon (Forman 2011, 235-236).

3.5 *Conscious Rap*

Conscious rap is a subgenre of hip hop music which focuses on creating vigilance, raising awareness of world events and making the listener ask questions about politics, life and society. Lyrics of a common conscious rap song usually criticize violence, corruption, racism and discrimination. The purpose of conscious rap is to evoke questions and induce forming opinions about usually serious topics. Conscious rap was developed in the early 1980s in the USA. Hip hop artists such as Public Enemy, KRS-One or Grandmaster Flash were the first ones to turn rap music into a kind of social activism with their criticism of politics and society. The fact that this subgenre deals with serious topics and does not strive to be very appealing, causes that conscious rap has never really been mainstream and only few of its tracks have become super popular (Rose 2008, 242-245). But even today's conscious rap has numerous representations in the United States of America, rappers such as Nas, Immortal Technique, Lupe Fiasco, Jay-Z, Kendrick Lamar, Joey Bada\$\$ or J. Cole publish music about serious topics questioning the life of the contemporary society. Conscious rap has not been in the United Kingdom as long as in America and there are not any well known rappers who could be securely called conscious rappers, but there are some rappers who decided to make music about serious topics besides their classic grime or trap production, for instance Devlin, Giggs, Dizzee Rascal or Luc Skyz (Forman 2011, 95-97).

3.6 *Trap*

At the beginning of the new millennium trap music evolved from gangsta rap music in southern states of the United States of America, more specifically in Florida, Georgia and Texas. Especially Houston and Atlanta became the Mecca of trap music.

The sound of trap instrumental music differs dependently on its origins, but what is typical for trap music worldwide is frequent use of hi-hat, 808 drums and melodic synthesizers. The name trap originally meant a house used for selling drugs. These trap houses have all the windows and backdoors barricaded and guarded, so nobody can leave them without the permission of the gang members. As its name might prompt, trap music has always been about dealing and misusing drugs and criminality generally. This offspring of gangsta rap music possesses even more vulgar lyrics and disrespectful attitudes to authorities than its ancestor. The most symbolic trap artists of this era were for instance Fresh Breeze, Ghetto Mafia or Dungeon Family (Veselý 2012, 84-86).

At its beginnings trap music was not as popular as it is today, because of its dark and grim sound, but this changed at the end of the first decade of the second millennium, when the second wave of trap music arrived. Rappers like Migos, Gucci Mane, Future or Chief Keef came up with a new progressive sound of trap music which made this subgenre very popular. The new sound was more melodic, less dark and way more enjoyable for wider audience. The topics of trap music remained more or less the same. Egotrips and songs about drugs, violence and disrespect to authorities and women persisted the dominant element of trap music.

The second wave of trap music was so big and impactful that it influenced even UK's rap music which was until this time predominantly grime. Rappers and groups like Section Boyz, Nines, Krept & Konan, K Koke or Giggs took inspiration from their colleagues from overseas and started making this criminal music with very dirty sound and with the use of synthesizers and 808 Roland drum machine. Trap music became very popular not only in the USA and the UK, but also all over Europe and it also has numerous representatives in Asia. Its sound still differs accordingly to the country of its origin. And so does its name. For instance in Chicago trap music is called drill, it used to be called crunk in Atlanta and rapper Lil Yachty tends to call his music bubblegum trap, because he often uses melodies which are more playful and cartoonish than typical trap music. But the name trap has become so notorious that all the other names slowly perish (Forman 2011, 288, 289).

3.7 *Mumble Rap*

The term mumble rap is rather a style of rapping than an established subgenre. It is a derogatory name used to describe a new pattern of rapping developed by rap artists

using drugs like lean and xanax. High dosage of these drugs causes the person under their influence to mispronounce words, which might sound like a problem for a rapper, but mumble rap has gained huge popularity. The incomprehensibility of the text is compensated by melodic flows and various tones of rapper's voice. Mumble rap is associated with the online audio distribution platform called SoundCloud, which is commonly used by not very famous rappers. Thus the sound of the original mumble rap was rather dirty and rough, which was caused by low budget productions. However, with raising popularity of this style of rap, even big names, such as Future, Young Thug, Ski Mask the Slump God, Yung Lean or XXXTentacion, jumped on the wave of mumble rapping, which has brought it even bigger popularity. Mumble rap has no proper representation in the United Kingdom, which might be caused by the lack of interest in mumble rap amongst British audience or the fact that drugs like lean and xanax are more common and easily obtainable in America.

3.8 *Cloud Rap*

Cloud rap is one of the most widely spread contemporary rap subgenres. Its instrumental music is commonly very light, ethereal or even dull and enhanced with wordless vocal samples. The lyrics of a typical cloud rap song are usually surrealistic, abstract, consciously nonsensical and deal with topics such as drug abuse, depression, love and feelings generally. The quality of a cloud rap record might be even deliberately low in order to emphasize the vibe and feeling of the record. A cloud rap videoclip is usually set in the nature with abstract features combining classic rap clichés, such as expensive cars, jewellery and half-naked women and pop cultural components, such as features from old videogames and films, pokémon cards and images with space theme. These videos appear absurd, childish and usually also have deliberately low quality, often even look like an old VHS record. Cloud rap was originated at the beginning of the new millennium and its main protagonist was Californian rapper Lil B the Based God. The biggest rise of this subgenre came about a decade later with the arrival of a young Swedish rapper called Yung Lean. Yung Lean went even further with the abstractness and absurdity of his lyrics. The visuals of his videoclips were absolutely nonsensical, for which this subgenre became closely associated with the use of psychedelic drugs. The most influential contemporary cloud rappers are for instance A\$AP Rocky, Yung Lean, Lil B the Based God, Bones, \$uicideboy\$ or Ghostemane.

Even though the most dominant cloud rapper has European origins, the subgenre is more popular and widespread in America than in the United Kingdom. The most famous British cloud rappers are for example Lil Puro, WSTRN, Big Tobz or Blittz.

3.9 Emotional rap

Emotional rap or shortly emo rap is one of the newest rap subgenres that has already earned huge popularity worldwide. Even though feelings have always been a part of rap music and rappers like Eminem, Tupac, Kid Cudi or The Game spoke about their personal issues in their music a long time ago, emotional rap as a complete subgenre with countless representatives came into being in the middle of the 2010s. Lyrics of emo rap are ordinarily about depression, loneliness, sadness, relationships, love, drug abuse and death. The mood of emo rap music is rather sad and very melancholic. Emo rappers use very melodic flows and often even sing to emphasize the vibe of their music and illustrate their emotions, thus emo rap might be very easily confused with alternative or indie rock, the music of emo culture. Emo rap's instrumental music often uses samples of sad pop punk music and usually underlines the sad mood with sounds of piano or guitar. The most iconic and influential artists of this subgenre are Lil Peep, XXXTentacion, Yung Lean, Lil Xan, Kid Cudi or Post Malone.

3.10 Grime

Grime was developed in the early 2000s in London by merging UK's hip hop music and UK garage, British dance music famous for a hard bassline and fast tempo. Combination of the two genres resulted in a brand new type of very dynamic rap music with a unique sound and style. The tempo of grime music is usually about 140 BPM, the rhythm is set by a hard bassline and rapper's vocal performance is usually rather aggressive. Rappers focus on their flow more than on their lyrics, as it is still a kind of dance music and it is quite common in grime that a few consecutive lines might end with the same word. The topics of grime music are money, women, making music, life in the streets, fashion, crime and narcotics. It is important to mention that lyrics of a typical grime song are more decent than lyrics of a typical American trap song. For instance the word „nigger“ is used rarely in grime, but it is a very common word in other genres, especially in trap or gangsta rap. Grime videoclips are usually very simple and set in a street environment. Grime music has gained enormous popularity all over the world and rappers in Europe, Asia or America started copying the aggressive British

style, but in America this subgenre still remains marginal. The most iconic and influential grime rappers are for instance Skepta, JME, Wiley, Dizzee Rascal, Tempa T, Stormzy or P Money (Vesely 2012, 222-225).

3.11 Trip Hop

Trip hop was developed in Bristol at the beginning of the 1990s. It is a very specific rap subgenre which evolved from Jamaican dub. Unlike other rap subgenres, trip hop does not include classic rapping. It consists of mystical instrumental dance music, a very specific form of a recitation, chanting rhymes and vocal effects used to emphasize the ethereal vibe. Trip hop was never a mainstream music genre, it only expanded from the United Kingdom to other European countries such as France, Germany or Spain, but it had a significant influence on the development of other dance music styles, such as drum and bass or UK garage, thus we can consider it an ancestor of grime music. The most influential propagators of trip hop in the 1990s were bands such as Massive Attack, Morcheeba or Portishead. Contemporary trip hop scene does not have many representatives. The most famous current artists who still make trip hop music besides other genres are for example a French group called Chinese Man, a French rapper MC Taiwan or British rappers Tricky and Massive Attack (Vesely 2012, 185).

3.12 Britcore

Britcore is a British answer to American old school rap. It has developed in the early 1990s and it was a contradiction of concurrent rap subgenre called trip hop. Meanwhile trip hop was more about its instrumental music, melody and ethereal vibe, britcore artists focused on their lyrics and the message of their music. Britcore was very fast, compared to the American rap of this era. The theme of this music was about life of impoverished people, rebellion towards society and dissatisfaction with authorities. As well as in America, in the United Kingdom rap music of this era included lyrics about criminality and abusing narcotics, but unlike in America, British artists used a bit more decent lyrics. It was common that the tempo of britcore music was between 110 and 140 BPM. Instrumental music was thus faster than American old school hip hop. The most iconic britcore artists were for instance Silver Bullet, Hijack, Blade, The Icepick, Shaka Shazam or Huntkillbury Fin.

3.13 Horrorcore

Horrorcore is undoubtedly the most controversial and dark hip hop subgenre. It originated in America at the turn of the 1980s. It was created by the merge of gangsta rap, hardcore rap and some elements of metal music. Its lyrics are commonly very brutal, vulgar and shocking with their cruelty and perversion. Topics such as murder, suicide, torture, rape, cannibalism, drug abuse or necrophilia are not rare in this subgenre. Brutal themes and inappropriate texts are the reason why this style is highly criticized by the public. However, artists argue that it is only a form of black humor that is not intended to harm anyone, but rather to entertain. Its instrumental music is usually as dark as its lyrics. It uses samples of dark metal music with elements of hip hop and this combination usually sounds very sinister and uncanny. The most iconic horrorcore protagonists are for example groups Gravediggaz, Flatlinerz or Insane Clown Posse, but even legends of rap music, such as Eminem or Big L, have made horrorcore songs during their career. It is important to mention that all of these artists come from America, as the United Kingdom does not have a proper horrorcore representation.

3.14 Pop Rap

Pop rap is a crossover of pop and rap music. It is one of the most widely spread and popular rap subgenres. Pop rap originated in the mid 1980s, when rap artists such as LL Cool J, Beastie Boys or Run DMC started using more melodic tunes, catchy choruses and themes of love in their music (Veselý 2012, 71-73). In comparison with classic concurrent rap music, pop rap was softer, more melodic and crowd pleasing and that is the reason why it did not get much recognition from the hip hop community (Forman 2011, 107). Nevertheless, it is important to mention that pop rap is one of the reasons why rap music has become world's most popular music genre. Pop rap has not changed much since its beginnings. Pop rappers still make soft and catchy music about romantic themes and collaborate with pop singers, which has proved to be a great marketing move, as pop rap is the best selling music on contemporary music market. The most famous contemporary American pop rappers are for instance Drake, Eminem, Wiz Khalifa, G Eazy or B.o.B. The United Kingdom also has its pop rap stars, for instance Akala or Tinie Tempah.

3.15 Rap Rock

Rap rock is a crossover of rap and rock music which originated in the mid 1980s in the United States of America. The first bands that tried to combine these genres were Public Enemy, Blondie or 3rd Bass. They achieved a spectacular success and soon were followed by other bands, such as Cypress Hill, Run DMC, Hollywood Undead, Body Count or Linkin Park (Veselý 2012, 193, 194). Rap rock commonly uses combination of rock instrumental music, sung choruses and rapped or sung verses. This music is very melodic and can be either very aggressive and energetic or slow and melancholic. Thanks to its popularity and huge fanbase, rap rock has spread all over the world. Countless rap rock bands have been formed in Europe, Asia, Canada, Australia, but the most artists of this subgenre come from the USA. British representatives of rap rock are for instance groups Senser from London or Astroid Boys from Cardiff.

3.16 Rap Metal

Rap metal is a very hard music genre with explicit lyrics and heavy metal instrumental music. It evolved from rap rock in the second half of the 1980s in the United States of America. Fusing rock and rap proved to be a good move, so the artists decided to go further and tried to make their music even harder. It is no surprise that bands that came up with rap metal are the same ones who had come with rap rock. Music bands such as Run DMC, Cypress Hill, Beastie Boys, 24-7 Spyz or Rage Against the Machine were the first ones who tried the fusion of hardcore rap and heavy metal. And as well as rap rock, even this move was a success. During the 1990s the popularity of rap metal rose with groups such as Korn, Limp Bizkit, Linkin Park, Hollywood Undead, Slipknot, System of a Down or Hed Pe. During the upcoming decades rap metal spread from the USA to the rest of the world. Besides Northern America, this subgenre is very popular in Europe and Southern America. When it comes to the British rap metal scene, it does not have as many representatives as the USA, but still there are such bands as One Minute Silence or Hacktivist (Veselý 2012, 71-73).

3.17 Ragga Rap

Ragga rap originated in Jamaica in the early 1970s and it was soon brought to the United Kingdom by Jamaican migrants. Later it spread into other European states. It is a subgenre which was created by fusing rap and reggae music. Ragga rap uses ordinarily very positive reggae instrumental music whose tempo can be either slow or

very fast. Its lyrics are usually very spiritual, rather positive and often deep. They commonly contain message about life, religion, hope, doing the right thing and fighting demons. Ragga rap has never been mainstream, but it surely has its fanbase all around the world and especially in the United Kingdom, France and Jamaica. It is one of few rap subgenres which are more popular and widespread in Europe than in the United states of America. The most iconic ragga rap artists of all time are for instance General Levy, Yaniss Odua, Eek A Mouse or a French group called Guts.

3.18 Country Rap

Country rap, also known as hill hop or hick hop originated in the late 1990s in the Midwest and Southwest of the United States of America. The subgenre was developed by fusing country and hip hop music. It uses instrumental music very similar to classic country music with the use of instruments such as a guitar, bass, fiddle, drums and vocals. Texts of country rap music are commonly very simple and contain lyrics about cars, women, guns, alcohol, life in the countryside and partying. Even though these texts are usually explicit, they are not ordinarily as vulgar and disrespectful to authorities as texts of subgenres like trap or gangsta rap. Even though country rap is not a mainstream subgenre, unlike other world countries, it is quite popular in America. The most iconic country rap artists are for instance Lil Nas X, Kid Rock, The Lacs, Colt Ford, Jawga Boyz, Big Smo, Everlast or Bubba Sparxxx.

3.19 Jazz Rap

Jazz rap came into being in America in the late 1980s by fusion of African American contemporary leading genre, rap and African American former leading genre, jazz. Its instrumental music was very smooth and based in concurrent hip hop music with elements of jazz, such as trumpets, saxophones, trombones and double bass. Jazz rap texts were rather decent, smart, deep and about politics, African culture and music. Even though jazz rap developed in America, it soon spread into Europe, more specifically into the United Kingdom, its second central. Since UK jazz rap was strongly inspired by the American one, it did not differ much, but it is needful to mention that the audience and critics loved it. Jazz rap's popularity rose until the mid 1990s, when it was shaded by harder rap subgenres, such as gangsta rap and g funk in America and britcore in the United Kingdom. Although the period of its greatest popularity has already passed, the genre has never completely disappeared and jazz rap music still exists as a

marginal genre. The most iconic American protagonists of jazz rap music were for instance Digable Planets, Native Tongues, A Tribe Called Quest or Gang Starr. When it comes to the British jazz rap 1990s scene, there were such bands as The Brand New Heavies, Jamiroquai or Incognito (Veselý 2012, 306, 307).

3.20 Christian Rap

Christian rap originated in the early 1980 in the United States of America. Rap artists responsible for developing christian rap were for instance McSweet, DC Talk, D-Boy, P.I.D., Michael Peace and Stephen Wiley. Their music was spread by Christian radio, whose audience liked it, as the music was created to spread Christianity, elevate God, Bible and good morals. It was very similar to the contemporary gospel music. Christian rap was very lively, energetic, positive, and in contrast to normal contemporary rap, it did not include vulgarisms nor violent and disrespectful lyrics. Christian rap expanded to the United Kingdom during the 1990s, where it also succeeded. Rappers like Guvna B, Triple O, Sammy G or Dwayne Tryumf managed to raise awareness about Christian rap and about a decade later this subgenre merged with grime music and got a brand new sound which was very synthetic and modern. Even though in the USA nor the UK christian rap was never mainstream due to its limited audience, it managed to bear up until now.

3.21 Comedy Rap

Comedy rap is a music made to entertain. It is not a proper rap sub-genre, as it does not have its own style, sound or theme. It is a music that arises as a satyr and parody of contemporary rap music, as a humorous critique of political and social events or contemporary world trends. The first rap songs with comic elements were made in the 1980s. Rappers like Biz Markie or The Fat Boys merged hip hop music with unconventional street humour. Rap music and comedy proved to be a success, and some rappers who had only been making serious and hard rap music suddenly began using funny punchlines in their songs, which is a proof that comedy rap has influenced rap music, as we know it, for good. Rappers and comedians from the USA and the UK, such as Lil Dicky, Big Shaq, Jon Lajoie or Afroman, are living proofs that rap and comedy go hand in hand.

3.22 Freestyle

Freestyle rap is a kind of musical improvisation without any preparation. Freestyle artists come up with new lines as they are rapping to an instrumental music or acapella. This kind of improvisation usually has no concept and its lyrics are commonly simple and vague. Freestyle rapping is as old as rap music itself, thus it is impossible to specify the date and place of its origins. Before rap music became popular and recognized, freestyle rapping in the streets was one of the only ways rappers could express themselves. Noteworthy are also freestyle rap battles. Freestyle rap battles are an insult contest between two rappers in front of the audience which later decides whose performance was better. These battles usually take several time limited rounds (Veselý 2012, 263-265).

Subgenres of American and British rap were discussed in this chapter. Their difference in topics, style of performance and vocabulary are crucial to understanding the different development of rap music in different parts of the world. It has to be taken into account that some rap subgenres are more typical for one of the countries than for the other, but some of the subgenres, such as trap, are very significant in both countries, thus more attention was paid to them.

4 Language and cultural differences and similarities of British and American rap music

American and British rap music are distinct in several aspects. Their music cultures differ in fashion, sound, videoclips, pronunciation, themes used in music and most importantly in vocabulary and jargon. Even though in both of these countries the most common theme in rap music is living and making money on the streets, there are many differences in the terminology used.

4.1 Drugs

Controversial topics such as sex, violence and drugs have been occurring in rap music since the mid-80s. When it comes to the topics that rappers choose to write about in the twenty-first century, it is clear that American rap music is more influenced by drugs, which is a huge topic that occurs very often throughout most subgenres (Veselý 2012, 372, 373). There are also relatively frequent references to drugs in the UK rap, but the influence of narcotics is not so commonplace in Great Britain. Topics that predominate over narcotics in Great Britain are for instance rap skills, value of having a reliable gang and street credibility. The reason why drugs are a bigger issue in American rap is obvious. Narcotics are more easily obtainable in the United States, as the American health care system provides strong prescription drugs even to patients who would only be able to get mild medicine, which is accessible without prescription, in Europe. Another reason for the US drug rap obsession is the fact that the most drug influenced subgenres are drill rap, trap music and especially cloud rap. And since cloud rap is not very popular in the UK and does not even have its proper representation there, it is logical that abuse of narcotics is not such a big topic in British rap music.

Artist: Lil Wayne (US)

Song name: I Feel Like Dying

Swimmin' laps around a bottle of Louis the XIII

Jumping off of a mountain into a sea of Codeine

Psst! I can mingle with the stars, and throw a party on Mars

I am a prisoner locked up behind Xanax bars

[Lil Wayne, et al. 2007 in Gumpy Kidd 2009]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

4.2 Commercialization and fashion

Another thing which is very obvious even for a person who is not interested in hip hop culture is that American rap is way more commercial. Lately it has been a trend to rap about brands of cars, clothing, shoes and watches. The reason is conspicuous, rap artists collaborate with these brands and since American music is generally the most popular worldwide, the influence of the collaborations is best seen here. I am not saying that the only reason for mentioning clothing brands in rap music is collaborations with the brands as rap music has been connected with luxurious fashion brands since its beginnings. Collaborations of rappers and clothing brands proved to be a good marketing move already in the late 90s, but in recent times rapping about fashion has become a cult (Vesely 2012, 389-392). Clearly, there are mentions of fashion, watches and cars in British rap music as well, but this topic is not that dominant on the eastern coast of the Atlantic Ocean. The clothing style differs too. Whereas rappers in the United States often tend to boast with luxurious and expensive brands such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci or Versace, the trend of British rap fashion is a tracksuit of red or black colour.

Artist: 50 Cent (US)

Song name: PIMP

Now shorty, she in the club, she dancing for dollars

She got a thing for that Gucci, that Fendi, that Prada

That BCBG, Burberry, Dolce and Gabbana

[50 Cent, et al. 2003 in 50 Cent 2009]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

Artist: Takeoff (US)

Song name: I'm Gucci

Gucci slippers in the spring time, Gucci boots in the winter time

Four zip when it's lean time, steak and shrimp when it's dinner time

[Migos, et al. 2015 in Migos ATL 2015]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

Artist: Offset (US)

Song name: Versace

This is the life that I chose, bought out the store, can't go back no more

Versace my clothes, while I'm sellin' them bows

Versace took over, it took out my soul

[Migos, et al. 2013 in Migos ATL 2013]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

Artist: Skepta (UK)

Song name: Shutdown

Fashion week and it's shutdown

Went to the show sitting in the front row

In the black tracksuit and it's shutdown

[Skepta, et al. 2015 in Skepta 2015]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

Artist: Bugzy Malone (UK)

Song name: Bruce Wayne

Everything black on the C63 for real impact

Man could never tell me that I'm whack when I'm sat back in the tracksuit that I designed and it's mad

[Bugzy Malone, et al. 2017 in Bugzy Malone 2017]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

4.3 The N word and vulgarities generally

A noteworthy distinction between American and British rap music is that American rap is generally more vulgar and disrespectful. Of course this statement does not apply to all the artists, but when we take a closer look at today's mainstream rap production, it is clearly visible, that American rappers tend to use more explicit lyrics. I do not mean to say that British rappers are noble gentlemen who only use refined vocabulary, but their lyrics are commonly not as disrespectful to authorities or especially to women. Although both American and British rap artists do not hesitate to use such terms as bitch, hoe and hooker, it is predominantly the American scene that is engrossed with the topics of pimping, misogyny and hypermasculinity. A separate chapter of the linguistic distinction between rap music of these two countries is the use of the word

„nigger“ or „nigga“. American rappers use it much more often than their colleagues from overseas. American rappers are literally obsessed with this derogatory term, meanwhile in the United Kingdom it is quite rare to hear the „n word“ in rap music.

Artist: YG (US)

Song name: My nigga

*I said that I'mma ride for my motherfuckin' nigga
Most likely I'mma die with my finger on the trigger
I've been grindin outside all day with my niggas
And I ain't goin' in unless I'm with my niggas*

[YG, et al. 2013 in YG 2013]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

Artist: Common (US)

Song name: Heidi Hoe

*What up bitch? I'm Peavey Wheatstraw
And you don't stop with the heidi heidi hoe
Hi hoe or bye hoe if you're lookin' for a sucker
I'm just another motherfucker
Pucker your lips do flipslike Mary Lou
Just because I fucked you doesn't mean that I'm a marry you*

[Common, et al. 1992 in thinkcommon 2017]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

4.4 The attitude of female rappers

Even though there have always been females rappers on the scene, rapping has always been rather a male discipline. The reasons are obvious. Rap as a music genre has always been rather hard, raw and filled with black masculinity. It is not easy to acquire credibility and respect in this music genre as a female now and it was even more difficult when the genre was still being shaped and seeking for recognition back in the 70s and 80s. However, rappers like Lauryn Hill of The Fugees, Lil Kim, Nicki Minaj, Cardi B, Lady Leshurr or M.I.A still managed to get an honorable status and a reputable position in the world of rap by means of exceptional rap and marketing skills. Thus, these artists from both coasts of the Atlantic Ocean proved that it is possible for them to

compete with their male colleagues. There are several differences between male and female rap. The female rap is relatively more subtle, melodic and deals with slightly different themes. The common element of male and female rap is provocativeness, boasting about money and social status (Forman 2011, 345-347). When it comes to the general differences between British female rappers and American female rappers, it is important to mention that one can not speak for everybody. It is impossible to characterize all the music made by female rappers and come to a conclusion that fits all the samples, there will always be exceptions, but it is possible to notice and highlight some common features that appear often.

Both American and British female rappers frequently rap about having class, style, independence and more money than others. Another shared aspect is the perception of men in the texts. Just as women are often referred to in male rap texts only as sexual partners of no other social value, in female rap men are women's instruments to provide pleasure in the form of money, luxurious gifts and sexual satisfaction. Men are also criticized for bad manners, attitudes, habits, financial situation or sexual skills. An aspect that happens to be quite different in the USA and the UK is the form of presentation of a female rapper. Whereas in the UK female rappers tend to have an image of independent, strong, audacious women who have managed to succeed in a genre controlled by men, in the USA female rappers use their sex appeal and partial nudity to achieve their sales goals. Rappers like Nicki Minaj or Cardi B clearly strive to be sexual icons and pander to their audience with seductive video clips and half-naked photos on the covers of their albums (Forman 2011, 241, 242). The last aspect of difference that definitely should be mentioned is the attitude towards luxury. Although both British and American female rappers frequently mention expensive clothing brands in their music, the American ones appear almost obsessed with it and references to expensive jewellery, apparel and cars tend to be more common in the USA.

Artist: Lil Kim (US)

Song name: Not Tonight

After ten times we fucked, I think I bust twice

He was nice, kept my neck filled with ice

Put me in Chanel's, kept me out nice

Cold suckin' his dick, rockin' tha mike

[Lil' Kim, et al. 1996 in Lovell 2011]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

Artist: Nicki Minaj (US)

Song name: Barbie Tingz

I'ma put you in the box where my dollies been

Chop it up and the next stop garbage bin

Cause you hoes too old to be gossipin'

I'm just tryna find out when the new Porsche come in

[Nicki Minaj, et al. 2018 in Nicki Minaj 2018]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

Artist: Lady Leshurr (UK)

Song name: Queen's Speech 4

Get as much money as you can whilst you're poppin' cus it doesn't last forever

Record label on my back they want me to deliver I'm not good with pressure

Mommy told me take it slow cus I'm always on the road I said never

I got bags under my eyes man it's no surprise I ain't talking leather

[Lady Leshurr, et al. 2015 in Lady Leshurr 2015]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

4.5 Music videos and egotripping

Video clips are an inseparable part of the music industry generally. When it comes to American rap video clips, it is well known that they are meant to be pompous and glamorous. Expensive cars, clothes and accessories, beautiful half-naked ladies all around, guns, money and narcotics are usually the typical content of such videoclips. Obviously it is not the case of all American music videos, there are many exceptions especially in subgenres with deeper themes, such as conscious or Christian rap. An exemplary American video clip is the pompous show of luxury I have mentioned above, though. A typical British rap video clip is very different. UK rappers rely on simplicity, as their video clips are very often just one uncut shot of the artist rapping to the camera on a street, in a park or even in a shop. A good example of such a simple music video is an outstanding video clip of a famous British rapper called Stormzy. Stormzy decided to make his music video as simple as possible and just recorded himself rapping in a park

with a bunch of his friends standing behind him and supporting him with adlibs. Not only did the video of the song Shut Up receive tens of millions of views on YouTube, but also made the rapper a superstar of the genre and one of the most iconic UK rappers of his generation.

Egotripping has been a huge topic of rap music generally since the origins of the genre, but latterly the mania with money, fame and clout has become phenomenal. An interesting fact is that whereas in the United States rappers tend to make egotrip songs about money, expensive cars and clothes, British rappers prefer to boast about their street credibility and rap skills. I do not claim that there is no British rap song containing showing off about money or an American rap song about street credibility, but each country has its more and less typical topics.

Artist: Wu-Tang Clan (US)

Song name: C.R.E.A.M.

Cash rules everything around me

C.R.E.A.M.

Get the money

Dollar, dollar bill y'all

[Wu-Tang Clan, et al. 1994 in Wu-Tang Clan 2014]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

Artist: Lil Wayne (US)

Song name: Money on My Mind

I got my hand on the game, yeah I make a grip

Hundred grand in my fist, same on my wrist

Get key money from a quarter, blame it on the wrist

I whip coke like hoes, nigga I'm a pimp

[Lil Wayne, et al. 2005 in Lil Wayne 2018]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

Artist: Skepta (UK)

Song name: Numbers

Never thought you would see me with the crown

Never thought you'd be seeing me around

Knew we were on the same flight
You never thought you would see me in the lounge
This year men are tryna get cheques
Before that I'm tryna get the respect

[Skeptak, Pharrell Williams, et al. 2016 in Skepta 2018]
For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

4.6 Grime repetition

Another noteworthy linguistic fact is that British rap unlike the American often includes repetition of the last word of the line in the following few lines. This musical feature occurs especially in London's grime music, where it is quite common. It can have many purposes, e.g. to show the variability of meanings of English words, to keep a smooth flow or to emphasize the importance of the message.

Artist: P Money (UK)

Song name: Paradise

Used to be car engs you would watch
And you at school with a casio watch
Then the olders came round and you watched them
Get all the money, girls, chains and the watch

[P Money, Desperado, Ruger, Blacks, Little Dee, et al. 2016 in SBTv: Music 2016]
For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (YouTube 2019)

4.7 Terminology

When it comes to the terminology used in American and British rap music, the majority of terms are actually used in both countries, as British rap music emerged from the American and took up many of its musical and linguistic features. The list of the terms that are used on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean would be endless. Thus I will focus on the terms that happen to be different.

Starting with the basics, the name of the instrumental music differs. Whereas in America the name of rap instrumental music is beat, in the United Kingdom they tend to call their instrumental music riddim, which is a garbled pronunciation of the word rhythm and the term comes from dub music, which has Jamaican roots and is the predecessor of today's grime music. Nevertheless a beat and a riddim are not exactly the same thing. A beat is rap instrumental music, which was made particularly for one song

and the rapper writes his lines specifically for this instrumental music. A riddim is something else. Not only that a typical grime riddim is way faster than a common American beat, but also there is a difference in use of such instrumental music. A riddim does not have to be necessarily meant to be used only for one song. It is common in the United Kingdom that rappers during their sessions take turns behind the microphone and rap their verses to various riddims, which were not prepared for specific verses, but chosen randomly by the DJ.

Whereas a beat and a riddim are not exactly the same thing, as one is just a foreign equivalent of the other, there are many terms that differ in the British and the American rap slang, but refer to the same thing. I have managed to make a three column list of some of these words that are frequently used especially in black rap music. One column represents the American slang, another stands for the British slang and the last one consists of words that would a person not familiar with rap slang use. The list is to be found below.

<u>Meaning</u>	<u>UK term</u>	<u>US term</u>
Abusing barbiturates	Tooting barb	Popping downers
Ammunition	Live corn	Slugs
Rap instrumental music	Riddim	Beat
Amphetamine	Monkey dust	Speed, Chalk, Crank
BMW car	German whip	Beamer
Common insult	Wasteman, Twat	Wanksta
Cocaine	Beak	Yayo
Group	Mandem, Gang	Gang, Clique, Squad
Handgun	Skeng	Heater, Steel, Gat
Luxurious	Posh	Boujee
Observe a situation	Lurk	Scope
Revolver	Spinner	Pound
Shoot	To crash corn	To spray/wet/smoke/pop
Shooter	Hooter	Sniper
Shotgun	Dumpie	Boomstick
Telephone number	Digits	Math
Very good	Wicked, Mad	Dope, Lit

4.8 Language

The language of rap is generally simplified, and includes several easily noticeable features which appear in rap music on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. These features include for instance deliberate omission of the verb to be, e.g. „Damn, you cold!“, use of an infinitive form in the place where the verb should be conjugated, e.g. „He be spittin'!“, intentional misconjugation, e.g. „You's dead!“, or garbled pronunciation of frequently used words, e.g. „lil', hoe or shawty“,. There are actually several reasons why these linguistic anomalies happen to occur specifically in black rap music. The most obvious and significant reason is that black people have been socially disadvantaged for centuries and as their music evolved the language of their music adapted their conversational manners. Another reason is that rap is a rapper's weapon and thus they need to use the words that are best suited. An undeniable advantage is that colloquial and simplified speech enables the speaker to involve linguistic ambiguities and hidden meanings more easily. Another factor that has to be mentioned is that music is a representation and reflexion of the artist's attitude and the attitude of the oppressed black minority, this message was not entirely cheerful and positive and thus its language had to be shaped to fit the meaning of the message. And finally, it is easier to rhyme and keep a smooth flow that fits the beat when easier language is used, so it is actually quite common that rappers deliberately garble the pronunciation of the last words of their lines in order to follow the rhyme or keep up with the instrumental music (Vesely 2012, 261-263).

4.9 Pronunciation

It is a well known fact that the pronunciation of British and American English is different in numerous ways. It would take a whole thesis to list and describe all of them, starting with the British silent r after long vowels and ending with different stresses and intonation. Not to mention that every region, town or even district can have their own style of pronunciation. This part of the thesis is not meant to contain all the pronunciation differences and their reasons and purposes. It is rather focused on the terms and vocabulary that are used in both black British rap and black American rap music and these sounds are different depending on their origins. Almost every word has a slightly different pronunciation dependent on the type of English used and it is not

easy to define what is the most commonly used pronunciation of the words in the region given as there are many minorities that influence the form of pronunciation in rap music in both of the countries. The pronunciation used in British rap music is strongly influenced by Jamaican immigrants and the scale of accents used in American rap music is so broad that it would be impossible to choose only one common type of pronunciation. Thus, I have chosen to use the pronunciation that is often heard especially in mainstream rap and I have decided to focus on the words that are used frequently in rap music where the differences in pronunciation are significant and distinctive. The list of these words is to be found below.

<u>The word</u>	<u>UK pronunciation</u>	<u>US pronunciation</u>
Bars	bɑ:z	bɑrɪz
Block	blɒk	blʌk
Bottom	bɒtəm	bɑ:dəm
Car	kɑ:	kʌr
Chance	tʃɑ:ns	tʃæns
Dance	dɑ:ns	dæns
Dirty	dɜ:ti	dɜrdi
Dollar	dɑ:lə	dɒlə
Girl	gɜl	gɜrl
Lurk	lɜ:k	lɜrk
Man	mʌn	mæn
Mud	mʌd	mɜ:d
Murk	mɜ:k	mɜrk
Plug	plʌg	plɜ:g
Problem	prɒbləm	pra:bləm
Rob	rɒb	rɑ:b
Stop	stɒp	stɑ:p
That	ðæt	dæt
Thing	tɪŋ	θæŋ

This chapter was to provide a closer look at the similarities and differences between rap music produced in the USA and the UK. Features such as pronunciation,

terminology, frequency of vulgarities, etc. were covered. These differences and similarities create the unique form of rap music and its specifics in given countries.

5 Conclusion

The aim of the thesis was to establish the linguistic and cultural differences between the language of black British and black American rap music. The establishing of these differences is defined in the five principal chapters. The principal chapters all together create a sophisticated and complex picture of rap music and its evolution. The main distinctions proven in the thesis were different approaches towards drug abuse, distinct ways of egotripping and dissimilar stances of female rappers towards the creation of their public images in the UK and the USA. The main evidence for these findings can be found in the Analysis of the lyrics chapter.

Rap music has become a very wide and varied genre throughout the history of its relatively short existence. The modern form of rap music is difficult to grasp in words. The merge of rap with other genres and diversification of the subgenres have made the genre challenging to accurately identify. Yet there are features that can help generally distinguish rap music made in the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

The main purpose of this thesis was to educate the readers about rap music. Although this music genre is rather inappropriate for the education of children, it might be found useful amongst older scholars. Rap music certainly has a lot to offer to the world of pedagogy, since it is a complex music genre with very specific linguistic, grammatical and phonetical features and that is why I believe its study might be profitable especially in the field of linguistics.

This is an emerging and comparatively young field and does not attract the same number of scholars as more conventional topics. Challenges the writer faced writing this thesis include difficulty in finding scholarly references and also selection of materials which were not too obscene. The original books listed in the original assignment were consulted initially as background reading and then new sources were used.

6 References

Evans, David. 2006. *Blues: Chronological Overview*. New York: Routledge.

Finnegan, Ruth. 2012. *Oral literature in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Forman, Murray. 2011. *That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge.

Genius: ATM. 2019. Accessed March 19, 2019. <https://genius.com/J-cole-atm-lyrics>.

Genius: Barbie Tingz. 2019. Accessed March 16, 2019. <https://genius.com/Nicki-minaj-barbie-tingz-lyrics>.

Genius: Bruce Wayne. 2019. Accessed March 15, 2019. <https://genius.com/Bugzy-malone-bruce-wayne-lyrics>.

Genius: C.R.E.A.M. 2019. Accessed March 17, 2019. <https://genius.com/Wu-tang-clan-cream-lyrics>.

Genius: Feel like dyin'. 2019. Accessed March 19, 2019. <https://genius.com/Lil-wayne-i-feel-like-dying-lyrics>.

Genius: Heidi Hoe. 2019. Accessed March 15, 2019. <https://genius.com/Common-heidi-hoe-lyrics>.

Genius: I'm Gucci. 2019. Accessed March 13, 2019. <https://genius.com/Migos-im-gucci-lyrics>.

Genius: It takes more. 2019. Accessed March 18, 2019. <https://genius.com/Ms-dynamite-it-takes-more-album-version-edited-lyrics>.

Genius: Money On My Mind. 2019. Accessed March 17, 2019. <https://genius.com/Lil-wayne-money-on-my-mind-lyrics>.

Genius: My nigga. 2019. Accessed March 15, 2019. <https://genius.com/Yg-my-nigga-lyrics>.

Genius: Notorious B.I.G. 2019. Accessed March 18, 2019. <https://genius.com/The-notorious-big-notorious-big-lyrics>.

Genius: Not Tonight. 2019. Accessed March 16, 2019. <https://genius.com/Lil-kim-not-tonight-lyrics>.

Genius: Numbers. 2019. Accessed March 17, 2019. <https://genius.com/Skepta-numbers-lyrics>.

Genius: P.I.M.P. 2019. Accessed March 13, 2019. <https://genius.com/50-cent-pimp-lyrics>.

Genius: Queen's Speech 4. 2019. Accessed March 16, 2019. <https://genius.com/Lady-leshurr-queens-speech-4-lyrics>.

Genius: Same shit different day. 2019. Accessed March 19, 2019. <https://genius.com/Skepta-same-shit-different-day-lyrics>.

Genius: Shutdown. 2019. Accessed March 15, 2019. <https://genius.com/Skepta-shutdown-lyrics>.

Genius: Versace. 2019. Accessed March 13, 2019. <https://genius.com/Migos-versace-lyrics>.

Genius: Who's in charge. 2019. Accessed March 20, 2019. <https://genius.com/P-money-whos-in-charge-lyrics>.

Pinkney, Craig, Robinson - Edwards, Shona. 2017. *Gangs, music and the mediatization of crime: expressions, violations and validations*. *Safer Communities*: 35-38. Accessed March 17, 2019. <https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/SC-01-2017-0004>.

Rose, Tricia. 2008. *The Hip Hop Wars: What We Talk About When We Talk About Hip Hop – And Why It Matters*. New York: Civitas Books.

Shuker, Roy. 2012. *Popular Music Culture: The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge.

Veselý, Karel. 2012. *Hudba ohně: Radikální černá hudba od jazzu přes hip hop a dále*. Praha: Biggboss.

YouTube: Paradise. 2019. Accessed March 17, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_XVIIByZYek.

7 The analysis

The main objectives of this section of the thesis are to analyse the attitudes of female rappers, the approach towards drug abuse and different kinds of personal vanity in the United States of America and the United Kingdom. All of these topics are examined in this part of the thesis. The examination is done by means of analysis of rap lyrics. The songs, from which the lyrics are taken, were chosen with regard to the aim of the thesis. The songs are, in addition, from the same era of rap music, so the examination can be as balanced as possible. The lyrics are assessed objectively. Only the factors that are relevant to the points to be proven in the thesis are taken into consideration in the process of evaluation.

7.1 *The attitude of female rappers*

There is a significant difference between the attitude of American and British female rappers. Women in the world of rap as well as male rappers like to write about money, expensive clothes and cars, fame and respect, but their diction is slightly different. Obviously they have a different starting point in a predominantly masculine branch of the music industry, but American female rappers tend to choose a somewhat different pose than their colleagues from overseas. British female rappers generally have the attitude of independent women striving for money in the hostile environment of the streets and illegal businesses. Female rappers from the USA are also undoubtedly strong and independent, but they generally have tendencies to forward an image of an object of sexual desire. It is well known that sex sells and the purposes of making songs about felatio or exchanging a body for a Gucci purse are clear. British female rappers in contrast prefer to rap about being self-reliant without the need to get paid for sexual intercourse. The common element of US and UK female rappers is rapping about being stylish, rich and respected in their community. The most common type of rap song that female rappers in both countries make concerns the egotrip.

The Notorious B.I.G. ft. **Lil' Kim** and Puff Daddy – **Notorious B.I.G.**

- 1 That's me, on MTV, no doubt
- 2 Titty out like what - I don't give a fuck!
- 3 Y'all know my attitude, can't stand my cologne
- 4 Then stay your ass home, you and your chaperone

5 Things done changed, but we continue to reign
6 As the King and the Queen of hip-hop, me and B.I.G
7 Frank White still listen to all the attention
8 I'm by his side, with the chrome fifth, playin my position notorious sexy, young thing,
from the ghetto
9 That bitch rockin mics in high heel stilletos

[The Notorious B.I.G., Lil' Kim, Puff Daddy, et al. 1999 in The Notorious B.I.G. 2014]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

- 1 The artist wants to be seen publicly and is proud to be presented on an international music stage.
- 2 She proudly states not having problems with revealing her body.
- 3 The cologne is a metaphor and refers to herself.
- 4 She deliberately insults her haters and indicates in a derisive way that they are too young.
- 5 Lil' Kim claims that even though the music industry and hip hop music have significantly changed, she and Biggie Smallz managed to keep their top position in the hierarchy of this genre.
- 6 She refers to herself and her colleague B.I.G as a queen and a king of the genre.
- 7 The rapper compares herself to Frank White, the druglord from the film called King of New York
- 8 She indicates that gangsters are a sort of people she associates with and claims that she identifies as being an attractive woman with sex appeal who has come from a lower class.
- 9 She boasts about her rap skills and points out her image of a classy lady.

The topic of the song is a typical egotrip that contains boasting about money, fame, respect in the community and rap skills. Lil' Kim's verse is mostly about her position in the rap world and her attitude towards her haters and public performance. It is clear that she wants to be perceived as an attractive woman and in the second line she demonstrates her approach to being viewed as an object of sexual desire. The lyrics contain strong language, metaphors, a synecdoche, a hyperbole and vulgarities.

Ms.Dynamite – It takes more

- 1 Now, who gives a damn about the ice on your hand
- 2 If it's not too complex
- 3 Tell me how many Africans died for the baguettes on your Rolex
- 4 So what you pushing a nice car
- 5 Don't you know there is no such thing as superstars
- 6 We leave this world alone
- 7 So who gives a fuck about the things you own

[Ms. Dynamite, et al. 2002 in MsDynamiteVEVO 2016]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

- 1 Ms. Dynamite states that she does not care about a man's expensive accessories.
- 2 She indicates that luxurious possessions do not necessarily signify a sophisticated man.
- 3 The baguettes are an elongated rectangular part of a watch. The materials, these components are made from, usually come from Africa and are mined by people who work for little money in miserable conditions.
- 4 She emphasizes her statement from line 1 by repeating that luxurious properties are not very important in a civilized society.
- 5 Ms. Dynamite claims that social status is not relevant when it comes a person's qualities
- 6 She states that when people die, it does not matter what their social status was nor how wealthy they were.
- 7 The artist restates vigorously that worldly goods are not as important as some people might think.

This song is not dedicated to a single person. It is dedicated to all the people who think that social status or wealth imply better qualities in a person. The lyrics have a clear message about the artist's priorities in life. There are some vulgarities in thy lyrics, but the language is overall more decent than Lil' Kim's verse in Notorious. Ms. Dynamite mentioned a global problem of exploitation in line 3, which indicates that she wanted to raise awareness about this issue. If we compare the message of both songs, it is clear, that the British is more intellectual, compassionate and separate from the

American one which deals with social consciousness.

7.2 *The approach towards drugs*

Drugs have been an inseparable part of black rap music since the mid-80s. The view on drugs that can be considered acceptable in rap music has changed substantially since then. It used to be tolerable to rap about marijuana, alcohol and at most ecstasy. Today's rap music bears a considerably wider range of drugs that rappers find interesting enough to rap about. When it comes to the difference of using drugs as a topic in rap music between the USA and the UK, there are clearly some general notable distinctions. In both countries there are rap artists writing about selling and abusing drugs. The difference is in the type of drugs that are mentioned in their music and in their attitude towards their abuse. Whereas British rappers make music about being under the influence of drugs, but being in control of the situation, American rappers have lately shown little respect to their health and wellbeing by abusing drugs in irresponsible dosages. In American subgenres such as cloud, emo or trap, the abuse of drugs has escalated into an obsession and many young rappers show their attitude of being reconciled with eventual overdosing. This attitude has been proven to be taken absolutely seriously by numerous deaths through overdose in the last few years.

Lil Wayne – Feel like dyin

- 1 I can mingle with the stars & throw a party on Mars
- 2 I am a prisoner locked up behind Xanax bars
- 3 I have just boarded a plane without a pilot
- 4 And violets are blue,
- 5 Roses are red
- 6 Daisies are yellow,
- 7 The flowers are dead
- 8 Wish I can give you this feeling that I feel like buying
- 9 And if my dealer don't have no more, then I feel like dying

[Lil Wayne, et al. 2007 in Gumpy Kidd 2009]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

- 1 Lil Wayne states that he is under the influence of narcotics that are so strong that he almost feels like floating in space.
- 2 He is addicted to antidepressants. The Xanax bars are a metaphor for prison bars.
- 3 He is out of control of his body and mental state.
- 4-6 The artist uses a famous children's poem to make a contrast with the following line.
- 7 The last line of the original poem was replaced by a much more sorrowful one to show the rapper's depression.

- 8 He would like to share this mood and feelings that drugs gave him
9 He states that he does not even want to live without drugs anymore.

The main topic of the song is drugs. The mood is very sad and melancholic. This song is a predecessor of what we today call emotional rap and it has all of its features, such as drug overdose, suicidal thoughts or apathy. There are no vulgarisms, which is rather unusual for American drug rap and this particular artist. There is no hidden message in the lyrics. The lines contain metaphors and features of surrealism.

Skepta – Same shit different day

- 1 Pass me the lighter let me light up the green
2 A million words in my head
3 Tryna think about punchlines that I haven't already said
4 I wanna write a diss track but my enemies are already dead
5 I only smoke one spliff but my eyes are already red
6 I'll be waiting til the cows come home
7 For man to offer me a biscuit cos I don't normally beg
8 Open up the pizza box we got earlier but it's full of crust and corn
9 We've been here so long
10 I just heard the speakers yawn

[Skepta, et al. 2012 in 3 Beat 2012]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

- 1 The green refers to marijuana
2 A million is a hyperbole. The artist talks about his ambitions as a rapper and his desire to leave a message behind in his music.
3 A punchline is a term that is used in rap music as well as in comedy. The meaning is the same in both.
4 Enemies that are dead is a hyperbole. He actually means that his enemies are not worth his time and effort, since he outgrew them in the field of music.
5 Spliff is a slang term for marijuana cigarette partly filled with tobacco. In this line Skepta states that it does not take much for him to feel the influence of marijuana.⁷
8-10 In the last 3 lines the rapper describes the sleepy atmosphere of his studio. Hearing the speakers yawn is a personification.

The message of Same shit different day by Skepta is that even a rapper's life can fall into a monotonous stereotype. The mood of this song is calm and sleepy. The language is rather decent and full of slang terms. There are plenty of metaphors, phrases with hidden meanings and a hyperbole in the verse. If we compare the aspect of drug abuse of this track and Feel like dying by Lil Wayne, it is absolutely clear that the rappers have a completely different approach towards drugs. Whereas Lil Wayne has lost control of his habit, which he proudly states in his music, Skepta's attitude is more about doing drugs occasionally to pass the time. Another difference is in the drugs that were mentioned. Whereas Lil Wayne rapped about Xanax and other antidepressants, Skepta chose to talk about smoking marijuana during a sleepy day in England.

7.3 *Different egotrip*

Another general difference between American and British rap music is the approach towards egotripping. An egotrip is a type of a rap song that consists mostly of boasting. The boast can be about almost anything, for instance money, houses, luxurious cars, jewelry, beautiful women, street credibility, rap skills or being signed to a renowned record label. The types of swank generally differ in the Great Britain and the USA. Whereas rappers in the United States of America boast predominantly with finances and luxurious properties, their colleagues from overseas tend to swagger about their street credibility. Of course, it is bold to generalize so much, but each of these countries has its more and less common topics. And even though it is possible to encounter a British rap song about money or an American rap song containing boasting about rap skills and street credibility, the global scale shows us the disparity of these topics in the UK and the USA.

J Cole – ATM

- 1 I know that it's difficult
- 2 I'm stackin' the paper it's sorta habitual
- 3 I blow the residual
- 4 And fuckin' yo bitch like its part of my ritual
- 5 Pardon the visual
- 6 But money, it give me a hard-on it's typical

7 I want it in physical
8 A million dollars, I count up in intervals
9 Without it I'm miserable
10 Don't wanna fall off so I'm all in my bag
11 Thankin' God like it's biblical
12 I know it's gon' solve every problem I have
13 I balled on the principal

[J. Cole, et al. 2018 in J. Cole 2018]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

- 1 J. Cole satirically claims that he understands the difficulties of the person the song is dedicated to.
- 2 He states that striving for money has become a part of his lifestyle.
- 3 He also states that he spends money irresponsibly when he feels like he has earned enough.
- 4 The artist boasts about his ability to seduce women.
- 5 He is ironically sorry for making the person imagine the situation of him having coitus with the person's girlfriend.
- 6 He jokingly says that money attracts him sexually.
- 7 J. Cole prefers to have his money in cash
- 8 He boasts about money again
- 9 The artist claims that without money he cannot be satisfied
- 10 To be in one's bag in this context means to be focused on a particular activity
- 11 The artist profanely compares money to something divine
- 12 He purposely contradicts the common saying that money does not solve all the problems
- 13 To ball means to make money by any means

The whole verse is predominantly about money. The verse consists of lines that either indicate that the rapper is wealthy or that he worships money like a divine creature. It is certainly an egotrip, since he boasts about the wealth he possesses and mentions that seducing a woman is not a problem for him. The language of this verse is not utterly decent, but it is not a typical vulgar American egotrip either. The message of

the verse is uneventful and not very enriching. The artist did not use any tropes, but a comparison.

P Money – Who's in charge

- 1 And I will teach you man about 75
- 2 I was on the back of the 75
- 3 I used to jack man on the 75
- 4 I used to bax man on the 75
- 5 I got the 136 from New Cross Gate
- 6 Hit Lewisham then got the 75
- 7 Even though there weren't 70 seats
- 8 There were 70 guys on a 70s vibe
- 9 That would jump off screaming "where are these breddas?"
- 10 I'll get a man duffed up for a benners
- 11 Hit him with Heinekens, hit him with Stellas

[P Money, et al. 2015 in PMoneyofficial 2015]

For the arrangement of lines, the following source was used: (Genius 2019)

- 1 The number 75 refers to a bus route in London.
- 2 The rapper claims that he used to ride a bus on this route.
- 3 He claims that he used to rob people on this bus route.
- 4 He also claims that he did not hesitate to use violence doing it. To bax means to punch somebody.
- 5 The number 136 refers to the section 136 of the Mental Health Act. The section allows policemen to arrest people who show signs of mental disorders.
- 6 In this line 75 refers to a car that was made in 1975
- 8 He jokingly exaggerates about the number of people who used to ride with him in his car
- 9 He claims that he and his associates used to get involved in brawls. Bredda is a garbled pronunciation of the word brother, this slang came from Jamaica and is quite common in London's underground.
- 10 To duff somebody up means to beat them in a brawl. Benners is East London slang

meaning ten pounds worth of cannabis. The rapper therefore states that he used to get involved in illegal trade.

¹¹ In this line P Money admits that he did not use to fight fair in the streets. Heineken and Stella Artois are brands of alcoholic beverages, whose bottles he used in the brawls.

This verse is definitely a kind of an egotrip, but apart from J. Cole's ATM, P Money rather boasts about his criminal past, street credibility and knowledge of street life. The lyrics are full of violence, but there are not any vulgarisms. The language of this verse is significantly more decent than the verse of ATM. There are plenty of slang terms which are used only in this particular part of London. There is a repetition of the last word of the line, which is a very typical feature for this subgenre of rap music. The message of Who's in charge fundamentally differs from ATM's message. P Money underscores his street credibility and hard beginnings of his career, whereas J. Cole only states that he is wealthy and his money means much to him.

In conclusion, the arguments stated in the initial statements were proven. Female rappers in the USA want to be pictured as sex symbols, whereas female rappers in the UK show a more intellectual and sophisticated approach towards their music. Drug abuse in the USA has a stronger portrayal in American lyrics than British. Lastly, the approach towards personal vanity in America is more money centered, whereas British rappers take greater heed of their street credibility.

8 Rap Dictionary

187: /noun/ (One eight seven) A number which refers to the Section 187 of the California Penal Code. This section defines the crime of homicide and the number in rap music simply refers to murder.

211: /noun/ (Two eleven) This number refers to the police code of robbery.

420: /noun/ (Four twenty) International marijuana code number which refers to a particular time of the day when people all around the world like to smoke marijuana – 4:20.

713: /noun/ (Seven one three) The area code of Houston – Texas, which is a very often used adlib or part of lyrics of Houston rappers.

808: /noun/ (Eight o eight) This number refers to specific dribbling bass drum sound coming out of stereo reproducers. Origins of this number come from Roland TR-808 Rhythm Composer, a legendary drum machine created in 1980. The sound is very typical for both American and British rap instrumental music, as well as the number is part of both of these cultures.

8 Ball: /noun phrase/ One eighth of an ounce of a drug – 3,5 grams

Acid: /noun/ LSD - a hallucinogenic drug

Adlibs: /noun/ Additional layers of rapper's voice put over verses to emphasize usually the last word of a line or to enhance the colour of rapper's voice. Rappers might repeat the last word of a line or add another mouth-made sound, such as gunshots or a sound of a drifting car.

Bacon: /noun/ Money - also known as bacon, beans, Benjamins, biscuits, bills, bread, broccoli, cabbage, cake, cash, cheddar, cheese, collard greens, cream, dough, Franklins, green, guap, lettuce, lincolns, loot, moolah, mozzarella, mula, notes, paper, pesos, ps, racks, Reagans, scratch, shekels, spinach or stacks

Baller: /noun/ 1. A person with money 2. A drug dealer - also known as a player or Willy

Banger: /noun/ 1. A very strong rap song which sounds well during concerts 2. A knife or a shiv

Bars: /noun/ 1. Lines of lyrics in rap music 2. Prison bars

Beamer: /noun/ A BMW car - beamer is more commonly used in America, British rappers tend to call cars of this brand German whips.

Beak: /noun/ A British term for cocaine

Beat: /noun/ Instrumental music in rap

Beef: /noun/ A beef is an argument among rappers or groups of rappers. Unlike other musical genres, beef in rap music might even end with the death of some of the artists.

Bird: /noun/ This word has many meanings in rap music. In America it can mean a kilogram of cocaine, a gun or a middle finger, whereas in the United Kingdom a bird usually stands for a young lady.

BJ: /noun/ This acronym stands for blow job which means oral sex - also known as a head.

Bloods: /noun/ The Bloods are an infamous Los Angeles street gang. The gang members wear red clothes and red bandanas and are known for rivalry with another infamous Los Angeles gang - the Crips. Many famous rappers are former Bloods gang members - e.g. Wacka Flocka Flame, B-Real of Cypress Hill, The Game, Lil Wayne, Jay Rock or Kendrick Lamar.

Blunt: /noun/ In the USA a blunt refers to an originally tobacco filled cigarette that has been hollowed and refilled with marijuana, but this product may differ dependently on the country where it is sold. For instance in the Czech Republic it is a rolling paper which contains tobacco and is used for smoking marijuana, but is not originally filled with anything.

Boo: /noun/ A boo or a boo boo is a slang name for a girlfriend or a boyfriend. This term is only used in the USA.

BPM: /noun/ Beats per minute – a unit defining the speed of music

Bucket: /noun/ 1. An old car in a bad shape 2. A home made bong

Bumboklaat: /noun/ Bumboklaat or bombaclaat is word used by UK rappers with Jamaican origins and means a very strong swear-word.

Busta: /noun/ A fake person

Buyaka: /interjection/ This adlib comes from the UK, more specifically UK Jamaican rappers and stands for a gunshot.

Chill: 1. /noun/ 2. /verb/ 1. Relax 2. To relax

Chin check: /noun phrase/ To get a chin check means to get punched in the face.

Chronic: /noun/ Incredibly strong species of marijuana

Coconut: /noun/ A person with hispanic origins trying to act like a white person, as coconuts are brown on the outside and white in the inside.

Coke: /noun/ Cocaine – also known as yayo

Cold: /adjective/ Mean, dangerous – cold blooded

Collab: /noun/ A collaboration of more artists on one project. A collab usually refers to a song or an album.

Chucks: /noun/ Ugly shoes

Clip: /noun/ A magazine of a gun – also known as a mag

Clout: /noun/ To have clout means to have influence, power, fame and respect. This term is very common in American trap music.

Crew: /noun/ A rap music group which consists of rappers, DJs and producers. The synonyms are a gang, clan, mandem, pack, team, clique.

Crib: /noun/ A household/home – also known as a pad

Crips: /noun/ The Crips are an infamous Los Angeles street gang. The gang members wear blue clothes and blue bandanas and are known for rivalry with another infamous Los Angeles gang - the Bloods. A lot of famous rappers are former Crips gang members - e.g. Snoop Dogg, Warren G, Nate Dogg, Kurupt, Ice-T, Coolio, Ice Cube of Westside Connection, Eazy E, MC Ren, Xzibit, Young Jeezy or Schoolboy Q.

Cruise: /verb/ To drive around with the intention to show off the car

Def jam: /noun/ A good record – also a name of a major recording label founded by Russel Simmons and Rick Rubin

Disstrack: /noun/ Shortly diss - a rap song made to insult someone, usually another rapper

Doobie: /noun/ A marijuana cigarette

Dope: 1. /noun/ 2. /adjective/ 1. Narcotics 2. Street equivalent of great

Doubletime: /noun/ Rapping twice as fast as the beat goes

Down low: /verb phrase/ To hide from the police after committing a crime - also known as to keep a low profile.

DJ: /noun/ A disc jockey – a person responsible for playing and mixing music

Dubby: /adjective/ A British slang for scary or frightening – derived from the noun dub, which is a genre with Jamaican roots whose studio production was very mystical or even spiritual.

Eagle/Deagle: /noun/ A street name for a handgun called Desert Eagle

Egotrip: /noun/ A rap song with a simple purpose – to boast and show superiority. Egotrips usually contain lyrics about money, women, luxurious cars, expensive apparel

and jewellery, rappers' street reputation and rap skills.

Eight: /noun/ A verse consisting of 8 lines

Fo fo: /noun/ A street name for a handgun .44 magnum

Flex: /noun/ /verb/ To boast with anything – clothes, jewellery, money, muscles, cars, a mansion or beautiful women.

Flop: /noun/ A failure

Flow: /noun/ /verb/ Defined as rhyme and rhythm – it is the style and way of rapping.

Freestyle: /noun/ /verb/ Rap without prepared lyrics

Fuck boy: /noun phrase/ A fuck boy or a fuck nigga is a man who tends to be very successful in seducing women.

Fugazi: /adjective/ Fugazi or shortly fufu is an adjective describing something or someone who is fake.

Game: /noun/ To be in a rap game means to make a living by rapping. There are more kinds of games a person can participate in according to the rap slang – for instance a dope game.

Gat: /noun/ A gun

Ghostwriting: /noun/ To have lyrics written by somebody else. Ghostwriting is very disapproved in rap music, because the music loses its authenticity. Ghostwriting is more common in the USA as the music industry is bigger there. It is usually A list rappers with big teams of coworkers standing behind them, who use ghostwriting. e.g. Kanye West, Travis Scott, Drake or Cardi B.

G.O.A.T.- /noun/ An acronym standing for the greatest of all time. This acronym is usually connected with the deceased legend of rap music, Tupac Amaru Shakur.

Go off: /verb/ To start shooting

Grills: /noun/ Artificial usually gold, silver, diamond or platinum teeth which rappers like to wear over their own teeth to show that they have money they can spend on material things they do not need.

Grind: /verb/ 1. To make money 2. To work

Heat/Heater: /noun/ A street name for a handgun

High: 1. /adjective/ 2. /noun/ To be under influence of any drug, but mostly it is connected with marijuana. 2. The effect of drugs

Hoe: /noun/ Garbled pronunciation of the word whore which does not have to be necessarily used for a woman who sells her body for money. Rappers with lack of

respect for women tend to use this name for all women except for their mothers. The synonyms are a slut, bitch, bish, bih, hooker, toth or mamacita.

Honky: /noun/ An unpleasant name for a white person

Hood: /noun/ A street name for neighbourhood

Hustle: /noun/ /verb/ Street business usually connected with sellings narcotics

Hype : 1. /noun/ 2. /verb/ 1. The energy following music 2. Trying to set people in motion during concerts

Hypeman: /noun/ A hypeman is a person that helps a rapper inflame the crowd. A hypeman is usually responsible for adlibs during a show, as it is very difficult or even impossible to perform all the elements of the song alone. There might be even more than one hypeman on a show.

Indo: /noun/ Indo is a name for marijuana which was grown indoors. Indoor grown marijuana usually has better quality and is stronger than marijuana grown outdoors.

Jigga: /noun/ A gangster – also known as a thug, trilla or gee

Joint: /noun/ 1. A marijuana cigarette – also known as an owl or a rocket 2. A collaboration of two or more artists on one song

Ice: /noun/ Jewellery

Issa: /phrase/ Garbled pronunciation of the phrase „It’s a“ popularized by American rapper 21 Savage

Key: /noun/ A key is a street name for a kilogram of cocaine – also known as a bird or a pie.

Lean: /noun/ Lean is a drink made of prescription cough syrup with high amount of codeine and promethesine mixed with soda, usually sprite. This drink is also known as mud, dirty sprite, purple drank or just syrup. This drink gives its consumer a very strong feeling of "slow high" with tendencies of seeing purple. It is one of the most popular drugs amongst today's rappers. Young rapper Trippie Redd called this drink liquid heroin in an interview with DJ Smallz Eyes.

Ledge: /noun/ An abbreviation for knowledge

Lil: /adjective/ Garbled pronunciation of little – many young rappers use Lil in their pseudonym, for example Lil Wayne, Lil Peep, Lil Pump, Lil Dicky, Lil Uzi Vert and many more.

Lit: /adjective/ Very good – similar meaning as „dope“

Lowrider: /noun/ 1. An old school vehicle with hydraulics and lowered suspension.

Lowriders were very popular amongst American rappers in the 1990s. 2. A homosexual man with sagged pants. Sagged pants were a signal of homosexuality in prison, so other prisoners would know who is willing to have sexual intercourse with them.

Lurk: /verb/ To stalk a person with intentions to hurt, kill or rob them. This term is very typical for UK grime and trap music.

Mandem: /noun/ A street name for a gang used by British rappers. London rapper Skepta popularized this term.

Mary Jane: /noun/ marijuana, shortly MJ - also known as weed, broccoli, buds, the shit, grass, hemp, lye, kush, purp or haze.

Mastering: /verb (gerund)/ A process of refinement of the sound, when a new track is being made.

Math: /noun/ A telephone number – this term is used more in America

MC: /noun/ Master of Ceremonies/ Microphone Controller / Mic Checka – a rapper

Meth: /noun/ A synthetic drug called metamphetamine – also known as crystal, crystal meth or Tina

Mic: /noun/ An abbreviation of a microphone

Mixtape: /noun/ A CD consisting of freestyle tracks, beats and tracks, which did not fit in the album.

Mofo: /noun/ Motherfucker

Molly: /noun/ MDMA – a drug also known as ecstasy or a bad pill

Monkey dust: /noun phrase/ A British term for speed

Mosh: /verb/ To dance very aggressively at a concert. This kind of dance includes pushing and shoving other people. A person might even get hit with an elbow. This dance culture developed in metal, rock and punk music, but rap music took it up and moshing is now a very common feature of rap concerts. Moshing takes place in a moshpit which is a circle in the middle of the crowd during a concert.

Munchies: /noun/ A very specific and strong kind of hunger which comes after smoking marijuana. People usually tend to eat sweets and other types of unhealthy food while having munchies.

Murk: /verb/ To kill or to hurt very bad. This term is used in both American and British rap music, but is more typical for the UK.

Nickel: /noun/ A nickel is \$5 worth of a drug

Nina: /noun/ A 9mm gun

Nose candy: /noun/ Cocaine – also known as a white horse or yayo

OD: /verb/ To overdose

OG: /noun/ Original gangster – a gangster who has been around for a long time.

Onion: /noun/ An ounce of a drug or a perfectly shaped woman buttock

Oreo: /noun/ A black person acting like a white person

OT: /phrase/ On tour /over time

Paddle: /noun/ A gun

Pep: /verb/ To hurt someone physically

Perp: /noun/ An abbreviation for a perpetrator

Perch: /verb/ To relax

Pimp: /noun/ A person, usually a man, who makes a living by supervising prostitutes – also known as a playa. In the rap slang a pimp can also be a very respected person.

Playa/Player: /noun/ This street name has more meanings. One of them is a pimp, but it can also be a drug dealer or a gang member who obeys the street rules.

Plug: /noun/ A drug dealer – also known as a dopeboy, dopeman, madhatter, paperboy or a hustler

Pop: /verb/ To punch or kill somebody

Popo: /noun/ A police officer – also known as a cop or a pig

Pound: /noun/ A revolver

Producer: /noun/ A person responsible for the instrumental music used in rap – the beat maker

Props: /noun/ The abbreviation of proper respect or proper recognition. To give props means to pay respect.

Pruno: /noun/ Wine made by convicts in prison

Pump: /verb/ To play music loudly

Punchline: /noun/ A part of a verse where a pun is hidden.

Real: /adjective/ To be real means to obey the street rules, to be loyal to the gang or to actually live accordingly to what you rap about.

Reeky: /adjective/ Somebody who smells bad

Rex: /noun/ Part of a city which is known for violence, selling drugs and criminality in general.

Ricket: /noun/ Offensive name for a Crips gang member

Riddim: /noun/ A riddim is a term used for instrumental music in British rap. The

difference between a British riddim and an American beat is that one beat is used for one specific song with its specific verses, but when a UK DJ plays a riddim, multiple rappers take turns to perform their various verses which are not made specifically for this one riddim.

Ride: /noun/ A car – also known as a whip

Rip: /verb/ To steal

Road dogg: /noun phrase/ A good friend

Rock: /noun/ 1. A diamond 2. Crack cocaine 3. A piece of crystal methamphetamine

Roll: /verb/ 1. To roll a joint 2. To drive with the intention to show off 3. To be successful in something

Rollie/Rolly: /noun/ A Rolex watch

Ruff neck: /noun phrase/ A person who knows the streets

Sag: /verb/ To wear pants low and show the top line of underwear

Sack chaser: /noun/ A woman who is in a relationship with a man only for money – also known as a gold digger

Scope: /verb/ To look at something or somebody with the intention to inspect them

Scrub: /noun/ A person with little money

Second breath: /noun phrase/ A method used during live shows to enable a rapper to keep going during the whole show, also known as half playback. To use the second breath method means to keep the recorded voice of the rapper in the background in lower volume, so nobody notices, when the rapper misses a word in order to take a breath.

Serve: /verb/ 1. To kill 2. To sell drugs 3. To have oral sexual intercourse

Sesh: /noun/ A session – There are plenty kinds of sessions in rap culture. E.g. a smoking session, a recording session, a business session, etc. To have a session means to gather with people for a particular reason.

Shackles: /noun/ Handcuffs

Shawty: /noun/ Garbled pronunciation of the word shorty, which stands for a girlfriend.

Sherm: /noun/ A marijuana cigarette dipped in PCP, a drug which has effects similar to ecstasy and in high doses might even cause death.

Shimmy: /noun/ A good looking round woman's buttock

Shit: /noun/ A shit can literally mean anything in rap culture. It is one of the most common words of rap music. Some of many meanings of this word are a song, gun,

drug, film, food, liquor, etc. A synonym is a thing/thang.

Shook one: /noun/ A person who pretends to be tough, but does not really want to be involved in physical confrontation.

Sick: /adjective/ A good rapper or a good rap song – also known as ill

Sip: /verb/ To drink lean

Sixteen: /noun/ A verse consisting of 16 lines

Sizzurp: /noun/ 1. Alcoholic beverage of high volume 2. A drink made of prescription cough syrup with high amount of codeine and promethesine mixed with soda, usually sprite – also known as lean, mud, dirty sprite or zerp

Skank: /noun/ A woman with bad reputation

Skell: /noun/ An abbreviation of a skeleton - a very thin drug addicted person

Skrrr: /interjection/ The most generic adlib of today's rap music which symbolizes the sound of a drifting car.

Slab: /noun/ 1. Crack cocaine 2. An old school car with a low chassis

Slam: /verb/ To inject drugs

Slang: /verb/ To sell drugs

Slob: /noun/ Offensive name for a Bloods gang member

Slug: /noun/ A bullet

Smoke: /verb/ To kill – also known as to wet

Snatch: /verb/ To steal – also known as to tax

Snub: /noun/ A .38 revolver handgun

Soap: /noun/ Actual soap shredded to little pieces with the intention to sell it as cocaine

Spit fire: /verb phrase/ To spit or to spit fire/lava means to rap really well – also known as to drop bombs.

Spliff: /noun/ A marijuana cigarette with a little amount of tobacco

Spray: /verb/ To rapidly shoot bullets around without proper aiming

Squab: /verb/ To fight

Steel: /noun/ A handgun – also known as a strap or a toaster

Steez: /noun/ Style

Stomp: /verb/ To confront somebody physically

Straight: /adjective/ Somebody who is trustworthy or heterosexual

Strawberry: /noun/ A drug addicted person who sells their body for narcotics

Stripes: /noun/ To have stripes means to have a criminal record

Suu Whoop: /phrase/ A phrase which Bloods gang member say before killing a Crips gang member.

Swag: /noun/ To have swag means to have nice, usually expensive clothes and jewellery – also known as drip.

Swing: /verb/ To have sex

Swisher: /noun/ Swisher is a brand of cigarettes in America. These cigarettes are usually hollowed out and refilled with marijuana, as the paper used by this brand is very suitable for smoking marijuana.

Tag: /noun/ A quickly made graffiti signature

Tooting barbs: /phrase/ This phrase is predominantly used in the United Kingdom and stands for abusing barbituates.

Track : /noun/ A rap song

Trap: /noun/ 1. A house used for selling drugs which has all the windows and backdoors barricaded, so nobody can leave anywhere but the frontdoor which is usually guarded by gang members – also known as a bando. 2. The most widely spread rap subgenre

Trash: /noun/ Something worthless – also known as garbage or rubbish

Trick: /noun/ A good looking woman who uses her appearance to manipulate people

Trife: 1. /noun/ 2. /adjective/ 1. Problem 2. Problematic

Trill: /adjective/ Combination of true and real, this adjective has a very positive meaning and describes a trustworthy and respected person.

Trip: /verb/ 1. To be under influence of narcotics 2. To act irrationally

Trump: /noun/ A wealthy person

Turbo: /noun/ A cigarette stuffed with a mixture of marijuana and crack cocaine – also known as zootie, premo, p-dawgs or cavvi

Turf: /noun/ A dangerous neighbourhood

Twenty sack: /noun/ A bag with marijuana worth \$20

Twisted: /adjective/ Under influence of narcotics

Vato: /noun/ Mexican equivalent of a dude or a homeboy

Vest: /noun/ A bullet-proof vest

Vibe: /noun/ A positive vibration/mood

Wack: /adjective/ Very bad

Wanksta: /noun/ A „wannabe“ gangsta

Wasteman: /noun/ A British insult used for a person who is considered worthless. It is a person who only wastes their life. This term is commonly used in grime music.

Wax: /noun/ A concentrated extremely strong extract of marijuana - also known as a dab

Whoop whoop: /interjection/ A very common adlib symbolizing the police sirens

Wicked: /adjective/ Very good – British equivalent of American lit/dope

Wigga: /noun/ A white person trying to act like a black person

Woof: /noun/ A criminal

Woolie thai: /noun/ A cigarette stuffed with a mixture of marijuana and cocaine

Work: /noun/ Narcotics

Worm: /noun/ 1. Penis 2. A person who is not trustworthy

Word up: /phrase/ Greetings – the synonyms are What's up or What's crackin

Wreck: /verb/ 1. To destroy something 2. To accomplish something

Yak: /noun/ 1. Cognac 2. Adlib used by American rapper Schoolboy Q

YG: /noun/ An abbreviation of young gunner/gangster – a name for a young gang member

You done know: /phrase/ A phrase used to emphasize something - You already know

Zig Zags: /noun/ A brand of rolling papers of high quality which rappers use to smoke marijuana

Zooted: /adjective/ Under influence of marijuana